TRIPURA RAHASYA

OR

THE MYSTERY BEYOND THE TRINITY



Translated by
SWAMI SRI RAMANANANDA SARASWATHI
(Sri Munagala S. Venkataramaiah)

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FOREWORD

Tripura Rahasya was considered by Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi as one of the greatest works that expounded advaita philosophy. He often quoted from it and regretted that it was not available in English. As a consequence Sri Munagala Venkataramaiah (now Swami Ramanananda Saraswathi) took up the work of translation in 1936 as another labour of love, adding just one more English translation to his already extensive store. This was first published in parts in the Bangalore Mythic Society's Journal (Quarterly) from January 1938 to April 1940 and afterwards collected into book form, of which five hundred copies were printed and privately circulated. The Asramam has since taken over the copyright and made it one of their official publications.

The work originally in Sanskrit is widely known in India and has been translated into a number of local languages, but I do not know of any previous translation in English. It is regarded as one of the chief text-books on Advaita, the reading of which alone is sufficient for Salvation. Sri Ananda Coomaraswami quotes from it with appreciation in his book, "Am I My Brother's Keeper?"

I for one much appreciate the present translation which will now be easily available for all who know English. Sri Ramanananda Saraswathi has put us under a great obligation by his painstaking work. It will surely be a gratification to him to know that his labour of love has at last found a permanent abiding-place and will not be lost to future generations, for many of whom it must become a spiritual text book.

October 16, 1959. Sri Ramanasramam
SADHU ARUNACHALA (Major A. W. Chadwick, O.B.E.)

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INTRODUCTION

Sri Tripura Rahasya is an ancient work in Sanskrit which has been printed all over India. The latest and best edition was brought out in the Kashi Sanskrit Series in 1925. The book is said to have been printed once before and issued in loose leaves. There was also an edition in book form printed in Belgaum towards the end of last century.* (The original Sanskrit text unfortunaeely appears to have been out of print for some years.)

The esteem in which the work is held for its sanctity may be gauged from an account of it given in the Preface to the Maahaatmya Khanda. Mahaadeeva originally taught the Highest Truth to Vishnu who in turn taught Brahma in the Celestial regions. Later Vishnu incarnated on Earth as Sri Dattaatreya, the Lord of the Avadhuutas (the naked sages), and taught it to Parasuraama with the added injunction that it should be communicated to Haritaayana who would later seek the Truth from him. Parasurama thus realised the Self by the guidance of Sri Datta and dwelt on the Malaya Hill in South India.

In the meantime, a Brahmin, by name Sumanta, living on the banks of the Sarasvati had a son, Alarka by name, who used to hear his mother called "Jaayi Aayi" by his father. Being a child, he too addressed his mother "Ai". He died in his childhood, and his last words on his death-bed were "Ai Ai" only. This sound is however sacred to the Goddess. Having been uttered in all innocence and purity of mind, it conferred unexpected merit on the dying child. He was later born as Sumedha, a son to Harita. Haritaayana is his patronymic. His spirituality developed as he grew up and he sought Parasuraama to learn the highest good from him, who in turn imparted to him the knowledge which he had gained from Dattaatreya. Parasuraama told him also that his master had predicted the compilation of the knowledge of the Highest Truth by Haritaayana for the benefit of mankind.

Haritaayana was worshipping Sri Minaakshi in the temple at Madurai in South India. Naarada appeared to him and said that he had come from Brahmalooka in order to see what Haritaayana was going to present to the world in the form of an Itihasa containing the Supreme Spiritual Truth. Haritaayana was bewildered and asked how the Saint expected it of him. Narada said: "There was an assembly of saints in Brahmalooka. Maarkandeeya asked Brahmaa about the Sacred Truth. Brahmaa said that it would be brought out by you in the form of a holy book. So I came to ask you about it." Haritaayana was at a loss and pleaded inability to reproduce the Sacred Truth learned from Parasuraama. Naarada then meditated on Brahmaa who appeared before them and asked what the matter was. When Naarada put the whole matter before him, he turned to Haritaayana and blessed him, endowing him with the ability to produce the book at the rate of four chapters a day. He also referred to Haritaayana's past and attributed his present inability to remember what he learnt to the casual and undisciplined utterance of the sacred syllable in his past incarnation. Brahmaa further enjoined Naarada to be the first to read Haritaayana's work when it should be completed.

The work was thus written by Haritaayana and is also called after his name Haritaayana Samhita. It is said to consist of 12,000 slokaas in three sections - The Maahaatmya Khanda (Section on the Greatness of Srii Deevi), Jnaana Khanda (Section on Supreme Wisdom), and Charyaa Khanda (Section on Conduct). Of these the first consists of 6,687 slokaas; the second of 2,163 slokaas; and the third is not traceable. The section on Greatness contains the prelude to the work and later treats mostly of the manifestations of the Supreme Being as Durga, Kaali, Lakshmi, Sarasvati, Lalita, Kumaari, etc. and their exploits and found in Brahmaanda Puraana, Maarkandeya Puraana and Lakshmi Tantra. Its contents mostly cover the ground of Durga Saptasati and of Lalita Upaakhaayana.

Sri Vidya (worship of the Supreme Being as Goddess) has a very holy tradition traced to the Vedas. There are two principal divisions, known as "Kaatividyaa" and "Haatividyaa" former was practised by Indra, Chandra, Manu, Kubeera, etc.; it is the simpler of the two and also more common. The other was practised by Lopaamudra and approved of the wise.

Sri Tripura Rahasya, otherwise Haritaayana Samhitaa, begins with "OM Namaha" ("Salutations to Aum") and ends with "Shri Tripuraiva Hrim" ("Tripura is only Hrim"). Aum is well known as the sacred syllable signifying the Highest Being in the abstract; so also "Hrim" is the sacred symbol of the same as the Goddess. The contents of the book are thus enclosed by these two symbols - the most sacred in the Vedas and the work is equally sanctified.

In Sutra Bhasya (the commentary on Brahma Sutras), Sri Sankara has used the story of Samvarta as found in Tripura Rahasya, in his commentary on "Apicha Smaryate" (Suutra), with approval.

There is a lucid commentary in Sanskrit on Haritaayana Samhita. It is named Tatparya Diipika and written in 4932 of Kali Era (i.e. 1831 A.D.) by one Dravida Srinivasa, son of Vydianatha Dikshita of the village of Mahapushkara in South India.

As for its philosophy, there is no real reason to distinguish it from Vedanta. Scholars however call this system the Taantri or the Saakta, and point out some apparent differences between this and Advaita Veedaanta. This system teaches that the Supreme Reality is no other than Abstract Intelligence. "Intelligence" signifies Self-luminosity and 'Abstraction' denotes its unlimited nature. No other agent can be admitted to exist apart from It in order to reveal It. The apparent variety is only due to Vimarsa, the gross aspect of Its absolute freedom known as Svatantra which at times unfolds the Pure Self as the Cosmos and at others withdraws Itself and remains unmanifest. Abstraction and manifestation are inherent in the Pure Self; these two aspects are given the names Siva and Sakti, respectively. There cannot be manifestation beyond the Supreme Intelligence; therefore Cosmos and the Self are only the same, but different modes of Reality. Realisation of the Truth is thus quite simple, requiring only constant remembrance on these lines (anusandhaanam) that Reality is not incompatible with the world and its phenomena, and that the apparent ignorance of his Truth is itself the outcome of Reality so that there is nothing but Reality.

Creation and Dissolution are cycles of Self-expression and Abstraction due to Swatantra. There are no Sankalpa-Vikalpas (modifications) in the state of dissipation and the Self remains as Chit in absolute purity and unchanging. The Self is uniform and undivided. The dispositions of the individuals of the previous Kalpa (creation) remain uncognised but potential, awaiting to become manifest in the alternating mode. The tendency in the direction of manifestation is Maya which later displays as Avidya (ignorance) when the predispositions are in their full swing. Chit, Maaya and Avidya are thus the same Reality. Cosmos is an expression in the medium of consciousness and thus not unreal as some would have it.

Here the Reality of the Cosmos is on account of the medium of expression, i.e., consciousness, which does not contradict the statement that forms, etc. are unreal. There is thus no fundamental difference between Tantra and Vedanta. Yet the Pandits say that Maya is made subservient to Brahma in Vedanta, that its application is limited to gross manifestation and that it is therefore gross which in ultimate analysis resolves itself into void; whereas according to Tantra, Maaya is an aspect of Reality and should resolve itself into Chit on ultimate analysis. This cannot be a valid objection. For, where does the above void rest? It must resolve itself into Chit.

The favourite example of the world being an image reflected in consciousness, as images in a mirror is common to both systems. Vide "Vishvam darpana drishyamaana nagaro tulya jiantargatam" in Dakshinaamoorti Stotra of Sri Sankara.

Without trying to find differences where they do not exist, let the earnest student apply the infallible test of the peace of mind brought about by the different modes of expression of the Reality and be satisfied and happy.

MUNAGALA S. VENKATARAMAIAH
(now Swami Ramanananda Saraswathi)

TO

BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

A PRAYER

SALUTATIONS TO SRI RAMANA - the living monument of Eternal Truth! The direct proof of the Inexpressible! May Thy Holy Feet lead me into the Sanctuary of Sri Tripura! Blessed be thy Holy Feet! Blessed Thy Presence! Blessed Thy dear ones! Blessed all that relates to Thee!

Blest be the Mother Earth on which Thou art! Blest be the Universe going round Thy Centre! Love of Manicka Vachakar personified! Essence of Gods and sages taken shape! Solace of the Forlorn! Refuge of the Oppressed! Help to the Meek! Voice of the Mute! Splendour of all! Reincarnate of the Vedas! Hail to Thee! Thine is the Glory! Oh, Signpost of Peace! Limit of Ananda!

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Jamadagni was a Brahmin saint who lived in the forest with his wife Renuka and his sons, of whom Parasurama was the youngest, the most valiant and the best renowned. The country was then ruled by Haihayas, a certain clan of Kshattriyas. Some of them

came into clash with Parasurama but fared the worse. They dared not challenge him afterwards. Their rancour, however, remained, and they could not resist their longing for revenge. They seized their opportunity when Parasurama was far away from the hermitage, attacked his saintly father and killed him. On the son's return, the mother narrated the unprovoked murder of the saint; she also desired that her husbands body should be cremated on the banks of the Ganges and that she might as a Sati mount the funeral pyre.

Parasurama vowed that he would clear the earth of the Kshattriya vermin. He placed his father's corpse on the shoulder and took his living mother on the other and set out along to the Ganges. While passing through a forest, an Avadhutha, by name Dattatreya, saw Renuka and stopped the young man who carried her. The Avadhutha addressed Renuka as Sakti incarnate, of unparalleled might (Ekaviiraa) and worshipped her. She blessed him and told him of her life on earth and her resolve to end it. She also advised her son to look to Dattatreya for help when needed. Parasurama went on his way and fulfilled his mother's desire.

He then challenged every Kshattriya in the land and killed them all. Their blood was collected in a pool in Kurukshetra, and Parasurama offered oblations to his forefathers with it. His dead ancestors appeared and told him to desist from his bloody revenge. Accordingly, he retired into mountain fastnesses and lived as a hermit.

Hearing on one occasion of the prowess of Rama, his wrath rekindled and he came back to challenge him. Rama was born of Dasaratha who, though a Kshattriya, escaped his doom by a ruse. Rama accepted Parasurama's challenge and got the better of him.

Parasurama returned crest-fallen and on his way met an Avadhuta named Samvarta, the brother of Brihaspati. Later he encountered Sri Dattatreya who instructed him in the Truth and so led him to salvation.

DATTATREYA

There was once a dutiful wife whose husband was, however, a licentious wretch. This couple unwittingly disturbed Rishi Mandavya, who had been placed on a spear by a misguided king. The Rishi, who was in agony but not dying, cursed them, saying that the husband would die at sunrise and the wife be left a widow. Widowhood is most abhorrent to a Hindu lady and considered worse than death. By the force of her dutiful wifehood she resisted the curse of the Rishi; the Sun could not rise; and the Gods were rendered impotent.

The Gods in council resolved to approach Anasuya - the ideal of wifehood - to ask her to prevail on the other lady to relent. Anasuya promised her that she would restore her dead husband to life; and so the matter ended satisfactorily for all.

The three chief Gods then agreed to be born as sons to Anasuya. Brahman was born as the Moon; Siva as Dhurvasa and Sri Narayana as Datta. The last is also called "Datta

Atreya," of which the latter world is the patronyamic derived from Atri, the husband of Anasuya. Sri Dattatreya is the foremost in the line of divine teachers incarnate on earth.

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THE MYSTERY BEYOND THE TRINITY

CHAPTER I

1. Salutation to Aum (undifferentiated Brahman, and yet the) Primal and Blissful cause, the transcendental consciousness shining as the unique mirror of the wonderful universe:

Note: - The one undifferentiated Brahman signified by Aum polarises as Sat-chit-ananda taking shape as Parameswari who, in Her crystal purity, displays the variegated phenomena which gyrate in equipoise within Her. Neutral Brahman and the polarised Brahman are thus interchangeable. The idea of the mirror implies the non-separateness of the object from the subject (conscious being).

2. (Harithayana said :..................)

"Undisturbed you have heard, O Narada! the Mahatmya (The Gospel) of Sri Tripura, which teaches the way to Transcendence."

Note: - Thus begins the latter part of the book; the first part deals with a narrative of Devi (Sakti - Sri Tripura), Her worship and Her grace. Tripura literally means the three cities. They are the states - Jagrat, Svapna and Shushupti. The undercurrent of consciousness in all of them, remaining unaffected, is metaphorically called the Resident Mistress by name Sri Tripura. The procreative faculty generating new beings and the link of altruistic love connecting the offspring to the parent are personified in the Mother. Hence the feminine termination of Tripura. "The way to transcendence" signifies that interest in Tripura purifies the mind and creates the zeal for enquiry into the Truth. The listener is now fit for the ensuing discourse on wisdom.

3. I shall now discourse on wisdom, which is unique because one will be permanently freed from misery, by hearing it.

4. This is the concentrated extract of the essence of the Vedic, Vaishnava, Saiva, Satkta and Pasupata lore taken after a deep study of them all.

5-7. No other course will impress the mind so much as this one on Wisdom which was once taught by that illustrious master Dattatreya to Parasurama. The teaching was born of his own experience, logical in sense and quite unique in its nature. One who cannot apprehend Truth even after hearing this must be dismissed as a silly fool to be ranked among the insentient and accursed of God; Siva himself cannot make such an one gain wisdom.

8. I now proceed to relate that incomparable teaching. Listen! Oh, the lives of Sages are most sacred!

9-11. Narada too served me to learn the same from me; for, service to sages enables one to apprehend their innate kindness, just as the sense of smell helps one to detect the intrinsic odour of musk.

As Parasurama, the son of Jamadagni, already pure-minded and pleasing to all, was listening to the Gospel of Tripura from the lips of Dattatreya, he became abstracted in devotion and so growing still for a time, his mind became still purer.

12-13. Then as the mind relaxed, his eyes glowed in rapture and his hair stood on end, as if his ecstasy could not be contained within but must escape through the very pores of his body. He then fell to the ground before his master Datta.

14. Again he arose, and being filled with ecstasy, his voice choked with emotion as he said: 'Lucky am I; blessed am I; through Thy Grace O Lord!'

15. That expanse of Grace called Siva, here incarnate as my Guru, is indeed gracious to me; gaining whose pleasure even the Lord of creation, looks a pigmy.

16. Does not the God of Death verily merge into the Self, if only one's master is pleased with one?

That Supreme Being is gracious indeed, just in so much as is my Master, for reasons unknown to me.

Note: - The meaning is that the Guru, being God, is mercy incarnate and requires no incentive to show grace.

17. The Guru's grace gained, I have gained all! Thou hast now kindly opened out to me the glory of Tripura.

18. I now desire fervently to worship Her Transcendental Majesty. Kindly tell me, my Master, how it is to be done.

19-22. Being thus requested, Datta Guru satisfied himself as to the fitness of Parasurama, whose zeal for and devotion to Tripura worship were intense; and he duly initiated him into the method of Her worship. After initiation into the right method, which is more sacred than all others and leads directly to Realisation, Parasurama learned from the sweet tips of Sri Guru all the details regarding recitation figures for worship and different meditations, one after another - like a honey bee collecting honey from flowers. Bhargava (i.e., Parasurama) was overjoyed.

23. Being then permitted by his holy master, he thirsted to practise the sacred lore; he went round his master, made obeisance to him and retired to the Mahendra Hill.

Note: - To walk round gently and peaceful, always keeping the centre to one's right, is a sign of respect to the object in the centre.

24. There, having built a clean and comfortable hermitage, he was engaged for twelve years in the worship of Tripura.

25. He incessantly contemplated the figure of that Holy Mother Tripura, performing at the same time his daily tasks and the special ceremonies connected with Her worship and recitations; twelve years thus passed in a flash. Then on a certain day while the son of Jamadagni was sitting at ease, he fell into a reverie.

27. "I did not understand even a little of what Samvarta told me whom I met formerly on the way."

28. "I have also forgotten what I asked my Guru. I heard from him the Gospel of Tripura, ...

29. .... but it is not clear to me what Samvarta said in reply to my query on creation."

30. "He mentioned the story of Kalakrit, but went no further, knowing that I was not fit for it."

31. "Even now I understand nothing of the workings of the universe. Where does it rise from, in all its grandeur?"

32. "Where does it end? How does it exist? I find it to be altogether transient."

33. "But worldly happenings seem permanent; why should that be? Such happenings seem strangely enough to be unconsidered."

34. "How strange! They are on a par with the blind man led by the blind!"

35. "My own case furnishes an example in point. I do not even remember what happened in my childhood."

36. "I was different in my youth, again different in my manhood, still more so now; and in this way, my life is constantly changing."

37-38. "What fruits have been reaped as the result of these changes is not clear to me. The end justifies the means as adopted by individuals according to their temperaments in different climes and in different times. What have they gained thereby? Are they themselves happy?

39. "The gain is only that which is considered to be so by the unthinking public. I however cannot deem it so, seeing that even after gaining the so-called end, the attempts are repeated.

Note: - Since there is no abiding satisfaction in the gain, it is not worth having.

40-41. "Well, having gained one purpose, why does man look for another? Therefore, what the man is always after should be esteemed the only real purpose - be it accession of pleasure or removal of pain. There can be neither, so long as the incentive to effort lasts."

42. "The feeling of a need to work in order to gain happiness (being the index of misery) is the misery of miseries. How can there be pleasure or removal of pain so long as it continues?

43-45. "Such pleasure is like that of soothing unguents placed on a scalded limb, or of the embrace of one's beloved when one is lying pierced by an arrow in the breast; or of the sweet melodies of music heard by an advanced consumptive!

46. "Only those who need not engage in action, are happy; they are perfectly content, and self-contained, and they experience happiness which extends to all the pores of the body.

47. "Should there still be a few pleasurable moments for others, they are similar to those enjoyed by one who, while writhing with an abdominal pain, inhales the sweet odour of flowers.

48. "How silly of people with innumerable obligations ever to be busy seeking such moments of pleasure in this world!"

49. "What shall I say of the prowess of undiscriminating men? They propose to reach happiness after crossing interminable hurdles of efforts!"

50. "A beggar in the street labours as much for happiness as a mighty emperor."

51-52. "Each of them having gained his end feels happy and considers himself blessed as if he had reached the goal of life. I too have been unwittingly imitating them like a blind

man following the blind. Enough of this folly! I will at once return to that ocean of mercy - my Master."

53. "Learning from him what is to be known, I will cross the ocean of doubts after boarding the boat of his teachings."

54. Having resolved thus, Parasurama of pure mind immediately descended the hill in search of his Master.

55. Quickly reaching the Gandhmadan Mountain, he found the Guru sitting in padmasana posture as if illumining the whole world.

56. He fell prone before the Master's seat and, holding the Guru's feet with his hands, pressed them to his head.

57. On Parasurama saluting him thus, Dattatreya gave him his blessings, his face lit with love, and he bade him rise saying:

58. "Child! rise up. I see you have returned after a long time. Tell me how are you? Are you in good health?"

59. He rose as commanded by his Guru, and took his seat in front of and close to him as directed. Clasping his hands, Parasurama spoke with pleasure.

Note: - Clasping the two hands with fingers directed towards the object, is a sign of respect.

60. "Sri Guru! Ocean of Mercy! Can any one drenched with Thy kindness ever be afflicted by ailments even if destiny so decree?"

61. "How can the burning pains of illness touch one who is abiding in the refreshing moon of Thy nectarlike kindness?"

Note: - The moon is believed to be the store of nectar with which the pitris feed themselves.

62-64. "I feel happy in body and mind, being refreshed by Thy kindness. Nothing afflicts me except the desire to remain in unbroken contact with Thy holy feet. The very sight of Thy holy feet has made me perfectly happy, but there are a few longstanding doubts in my mind."

65. "With Thy kind permission I desire to propound them."

66. Hearing the words of Parasurama, Dattatreya, the Ocean of kindness, was pleased and said to him.

67. "Ask at once, O Bhargava, what you so much want to know and what you have so long been thinking about. I am pleased with your devotion and shall answer your questions with pleasure."

Thus ends the First Chapter known as the Interrogatory of Bhargava in Sri Tripura Rahasya.

CHAPTER II

OBLIGATORY SENSE TOWARDS ACTION CONDEMNED

AND INVESTIGATION RECOMMENDED

1. "Ordered thus, Parasurama again saluting the son of Saint Atri with humility began to ask:

2. "Bhagavan, dear and esteemed Master! Oh, Omniscient one! Ocean of Mercy! Once before for good reason I was furious with the kingly class.

3. "Twenty-one times I strode the land exterminating them all, including sucking babes and those in the womb collecting their blood in a pool.

4. "My forefathers were pleased with my devotion to them; however, they ordered me to desist from such carnage. My wrath was at last appeased.

5. "On hearing of the renowned Rama the very incarnation of Hari in Ayodhya, my wrath was rekindled. Blinded by fury and proud of my prowess, I challenged him.

6. "I was defeated by that great Lord and my pride was humbled. However, out of his innate kindness he let me go with my life because I was a Brahmin.

7. "As I was returning mortified by defeat, I realised the vanity of the ways of the world.

8. "Unexpectedly I met Samvarta, the Lord of the Avadhutas, and instinctively recognised him to be like fire in embers.

Note: - Samvarta, the brother of Brihaspati, looked like a maniac wandering in the forests. Narada once directed the emperor Nivritta to him and instructed him how Samvarta could be recognised. The King accordingly met the Sage and prayed for his

help in the performance of a sacrifice, in which Brihaspati prompted by Indra had refused to officiate. Samvarta agreed, though hesitatingly, and later completed it in spite of the wrath of Indra. Indra attempted to break up the function but was rendered impotent by the Sage (vide Asvamedha Parva in the Mahabharata).

9. "His greatness was like red hot coal hidden in embers. Every inch of his body filled one with exhilaration so that I had a refreshing feeling in his mere proximity.

Note: - Sensation of Peace or of ananda is the symptom of Satsanga.

10. "I asked him to tell me about his state. His answer was clear cut and expressive of the essence of the sweet nectar of Eternal life.

11. "I could not pursue the conversation then and felt like a beggar maid before a queen. However I prayed to him and he directed me to Thee.

12. "Accordingly I have sought shelter at Thy holy feet, just as a blind man who is entirely dependent on his friends.

13. "What Samvarta said is not at all clear to me. I have learnt the Gospel of Tripura well. It is undoubtedly an incentive to devotion to Her.

14. "She is incarnate as Thou, and always abides in my heart. But what have I gained after all?

Note: - Prayers to God are only selfish in the beginning, yet they not only fulfil one's desires but also purify the mind so that devotion to God grows in intensity and the devotee desires nothing more than God. Then God shows His Grace by manifesting as his Guru.

15. "Lord, kindly explain what Samvarta told me before. It is certain that I cannot realise the goal until it is made known to me.

16. "Whatever I do in ignorance thereof looks like mere child's play.

17. "Formerly I pleased the Gods, including Indra, with various ceremonies, observances, gifts and presents of food.

18. "Later I heard Samvarta say that the fruits of all these acts are only trivial. I consider those acts of no account which yield only trifling results.

19. "Misery is not absence of happiness, but limited happiness. For as happiness recedes misery pours in.

20. "This is not the only miserable result of action, but there remains a still worse one, the fear of death, which cannot be mitigated by any amount of activity.

21. "My devotional practices before Tripura are similar. All these mental conceptions are nothing but child's play.

22. "The practices may be according to Thy instructions, or different. Again they may be with discipline or without discipline, since the Sastras differ about this.

23. "Meditations may also differ according to individual tastes and temperaments. How can that be? Devotion is just as imperfect as Karma.

24. "How can transient mental concepts of devotion produce intransient results of high Truth? Moreover, the practices are continuous and there seems to be no end to these obligatory duties.

25. "I have noticed that Samvarta, the Lord, is quite happy, being completely free from any sense of obligation to act and its disastrous results.

26. "He seems to laugh at the ways of the world, to stride unconcerned up the road of fearlessness, like a majestic elephant refreshing itself in a take of melted snow when the surrounding forest is on fire.

27. "I found him absolutely free from any sense of obligation and at the same time perfectly happy in his realisation of Eternal Being. How did he gain that state? And what did he tell me?

28. "Kindly explain these points, and so rescue me from the jaws of the monster of Karma."

29. Praying so, he fell prostrate and took the Master's feet in his hands.

Seeing Parasurama doing so and feeling that he was now ready for Realisation.

30. Sri Datta, whose very being was love, said gently: "Oh child Bhargava! Lucky are you - your mind being thus disposed.

31-33. "Just as a man sinking in the ocean suddenly finds a boat to rescue him, so also your virtuous actions of the past have now placed you on the most sacred heights of Self-Realisation. That Devi Tripura, who is the conscious core of the heart and therefore knows each one intimately, swiftly rescues Her unswerving devotees from the jaws of death, after manifesting Herself in their hearts.

34. "As long as a man is afraid of the nightmare, obligation, so long must he placate it, or else he will not find peace.

35. "How can a man stung by that Viper, obligation, ever be happy? Some men have gone mad as if some poison had already entered their blood and were torturing their whole being.

36. "While others are stupefied by the poison of obligation and unable to discriminate good from bad.

37. "Wrongly do they ever engage in work, being deluded; such is the plight of humanity stupefied by the poison of the sense of obligation.

38. "Men are from time immemorial being swallowed up by the terrific ocean of poison, like some travellers once on the Vindhya range.

39. "Oppressed by hunger in the forest, they mistook the deceptive Nux Vomica fruits for some delicious oranges.

40. "And in their voracious hunger they ate them up without even detecting the bitter taste. They then suffered torment from the effects of the poison.

41. "Having originally mistaken the poisonous fruit for an edible fruit, their reason being now blinded by poison, they eagerly sought relief from pain.

42. "And in their agony they took hold of and ate thorn-apples, thinking them to be rose-apples.

Note: - Thorn-apples are used for extracting a poisonous alkaloid. The fruit is fatal or produces insanity.

43. They became mad and lost their way. Some becoming blind fell into pits or gorges:

44. "Some of them had their limbs and bodies cut by thorns; some were disabled in their hands, feet or other parts of the body; others began to quarrel, fight and shout among themselves.

45. "They assaulted one another with their fists, stones, missiles, sticks, etc., till at length thoroughly exhausted, they reached a certain town.

46. "They happened to come to the outskirts of the town at nightfall, and were prevented by the guards from entering.

47-49. "Unaware of the time and place and unable to gauge the circumstances, they assaulted the guards and were soundly thrashed and chased away; some fell into ditches; some were caught by crocodiles in deep waters; some fell headlong into wells and were drowned; a few more dead than alive, were caught and thrown into prison.

50. "Similar is the fate of the people who, deluded with the quest of happiness, have fallen into the snares of the task-master of action. They are bewildered in their frenzy and destruction awaits them.

51-52. "You are fortunate, Bhargava, in having transcended that distracted state. Investigation is the root-cause of all, and it is the first step to the supreme reward of indescribable bliss. How can any one gain security without proper investigation?

53. "Want of judgment is certain death, yet many are in its clutches. Success attends proper deliberation till eventually the end is without doubt accomplished.

54. "Indeliberation is the ever-present weakness of the Daityas and Yatudhanas (Asuras and Rakshasas); deliberation is the characteristic of the Devas (Gods), and therefore they are always happy.

55. "Owing to their discrimination they depend on Vishnu and inevitably conquer their enemies. Investigation is the seed capable of sprouting and nourishing into the gigantic tree of happiness.

56. "A deliberating man always shines over others. Brahma is great because of deliberation; Vishnu is worshipped because of it.

57-58. "The Great Lord Siva is omniscient for the same reason. Rama, though the most intelligent of men, came to disaster for want of judgment before attempting to capture the golden deer; later with due deliberation, he spanned the ocean, crossed over to Lanka, the island of the Rakshasa brood, and conquered it.

Note: - The reference is to the Ramayana. Ravana, the arch enemy of Rama, induced one of his lieutenants to assume the shape of a golden deer and entice Rama away from his hermitage so that Ravana could forcibly carry away Sita, who would thus be left unprotected. The ruse succeeded; and later ensued the great battle in which Ravana and others were killed and Sita was recovered. Thus did Rama vindicate himself.

59. "You must have heard how Brahma also becoming on an occasion infatuated, acted rashly like a fool and consequently paid the penalty with one of his five heads.

Note: - Brahma had originally five heads. He and Vishnu were once contesting each other's superiority. Just then a huge column of light appeared in front of them and they wondered what it was. They agreed that he who found either end of the column earlier, should get the palm. Vishnu became a boar and sought the bottom; Brahma became a swan and flew up towards the top. Vishnu returned disappointed. Brahma at the point of despair came across a swrewpine flower. He stopped its descent and asked wherefrom it was coming. All that it knew was that it was falling from space and nothing more. Brahma persuaded it to bear false witness and claimed superiority over his rival. Siva was enraged, snipped off that head which spoke the lie, and declared himself as the column of light.

60. "Unthinkingly, Mahadeva conferred a boon on the Asura and was immediately obliged to flee in terror for fear of being reduced to ashes.

Note: - There was once an Asura by name Bhasma. He did penance and pleased Siva who appeared before him and asked him what he wanted. Bhasma desired that his mere touch should reduce any object to ashes. Siva conferred the boon; Bhasma wanted to test it on him: Siva took to flight. In order to save him from that predicament, Vishnu appeared as a voluptuous damsel before the pursuing Asura and enticed him. He became amorous and made advances to her. She asked him to go to a spring in front of them and rub himself with water, before embracing her. He was taken in. On his hand touching his body, he fell down, a heap of ashes.

61. "On one occasion, Hari having killed the wife of Bhrigu became the victim of a terrible curse and suffered untold miseries.

62. "Similarly have other Devas, Asuras, Rakshasas, men and animals become miserable by want of judgment.

63. "On the other hand, great and valiant are the heroes, O Bhargava, whom judgment ever befriends. Eternal homage to them.

64. "Common people, becoming foolishly involved in regard to their sense of action, are perplexed at every turn; if on the other hand, they think and act, they will be free from all misery.

65. "The world has been in the coils of ignorance from time immemorial; how can there be discernment so long as ignorance lasts?

66-68. "Can the sweet waters of dew collect in tropical sandy deserts which are already scorched by heat? Similarly, can the refreshing touch of discernment be sought in the red-hot flue over the furnace of long burning ignorance? Discernment is, however, gained by proper methods, the most effective of which is also the best of all, and that is the supreme grace of the Goddess who inheres as the Heart Lotus in every one. Who has ever accomplished any good purpose, without that Grace?

69. "Investigation is the Sun for chasing away the dense darkness of indolence. It is generated by the worship of God with devotion.

70. "When the Supreme Devi is well pleased with the worship of the devotee, She turns into vichara in him and shines as the blazing Sun in the expanse of his Heart.

Note: - Devi: Goddess.

Vichara: Discrimination, investigation, deliberation, judgment.

Devi is there in ignorance, in worship, in vichara and later, like fat in the milk, the curds and the churned butter successively.

71-72. "Therefore that Tripura, the Supreme Force, the Being of all beings, the blessed, the highest, the one consciousness of Siva, who abides as the Self of self, should be worshipped sincerely, exactly as taught by the Guru. The fore-runner of such worship is devotion and praiseworthy earnestness.

73-76. "The antecedent cause of these is again said to be the learning of the mahatmya (Gospel). Therefore, O Rama, the mahatmaya was first revealed to you; having heard it, you have now progressed well. Vichara is the only way to attain the highest Good. I was indeed anxious about you; and there is very good reason for such anxiety until the mind turns towards vichara from the overpowering disease of ignorance, just as one is anxious for a patient who is delirious, until one sees that the system shows signs of a favourable turn.

77. "If once vichara takes root, the highest good has for all practical purposes, been reached in this life. As long as vichara is absent from a human being, the most desirable form of birth, so long is the tree of life barren and therefore useless. The only useful fruit of life is vichara.

79-81. "The man without discrimination is like a frog in the well; just as the frog in the well does not know anything either of good or of bad and so dies in his ignorance in the well-itself, in the same way men, vainly born in Brahmanda, (Egg of Brahma (i.e., the Universe)) do not know either good or bad regarding themselves and are born only to die in ignorance.

82. "Confounding dispassion (vairagya) with misery, and pleasures of the world with happiness (sukha), a man suffers in the cycle of births and deaths, powerful ignorance prevailing.

83-84. "Even though afflicted by misery, he does not cease further indulgence in those causes antecedent to it (namely, wealth, etc.); just as a jack-ass pursues a she-ass even if kicked a hundred times by her, so also is it with the man and the world. But you, O Rama, becoming discriminating have transcended misery."

Thus ends the Second Chapter in Tripura Rahasya.

CHAPTER III

THE ANTECEDENT CAUSE FOR LEARNING THE GOSPEL.

ASSOCIATION WITH THE WISE MUST PRECEDE "VICHARA"

1. Having listened to Dattatreya's words, Parasurama was delighted and continued his questions in all humility:

2. "O Bhagavan! It is precisely as my Lord Guru has just said. Truly, a man will ever head for destruction in his ignorance.

3. "His salvation lies in investigation (vichara) alone. The remote and proximate causes have also been mentioned by Thee, and they have been traced to mahatmya. I am in great doubt on this point.

4. "How does that happen and what is again its proximate cause? Can it be that it is natural (like courage to a hero)? Then why is it not shared by all?

5-6. "Why have I not got it as yet? Again, there are others who are more troubled and more suffering than I. Why have they not got this means? Kindly tell me." Thus asked, Datta, the Ocean of Mercy, answered:

7. "Listen, Rama! I shall now tell you the fundamental cause of salvation. Association with the wise is the root cause for obliterating all misery.

8-9. "Association with the sages is alone said to lead to the highest good. Your contact with Samvarta has led you to this stage of enlightenment, which is the fore-runner of emancipation. On being approached, the sages teach the greatest good.

10. "Has any one ever got anything great, without contact with the wise? In any case, it is the company which determines the future of the individual.

11. "A man undoubtedly reaps the fruits of his company. I shall relate to you a story to illustrate this:

12. "There was once a king of Dasarna by name Muktachuda. He had two sons: Hemachuda and Manichuda.

13. "They were comely, well-behaved and well-learned. At one time they led a hunting party, consisting of a great retinue of men and warriors, into a deep forest on the Sahya Mountains which was infested with tigers, lions and other wild animals. They were themselves armed with bows and arrows.

14. "There they shot several deer, lions, boars, bisons, wolves, etc., having killed them by the skilful use of their bows.

16. "As more wild animals were being hunted down by the royal hunters, a tornado began to rase, pouring down sand and pebbles.

17. "A thick cloud of dust screened the sky; and it became dark like night, so that neither rocks, trees nor men could be seen.

18. "The mountain was shrouded in darkness, so that neither hills nor valleys could be seen. The retinue hurried away afflicted by the sands and pebbles hurled down by the tornado.

19. "A few of them took shelter under rocks, others in caves, and still others under trees. The royal pair mounted on horses and rode away into the distance.

20. "Hemachuda ultimately reached the hermitage of a sage, which had been built in a fine garden of plantain, date and other trees.

21. "There he saw a charming maiden whose body, bright as gold, shone like a flame of fire.

22-23. "The prince was bewitched at the sight of the girl, who looked like the Goddess of Fortune, and spoke to her thus: 'Who are you, fair lady, who live fearlessly in such a dreadful and solitary forest? Whose are you? Why are you here? Are you alone?'

24. "On being spoken to, that spotless maiden replied: 'Welcome, prince! Please sit down.

25. Hospitality is the sacred duty of the pious. I notice you have been overtaken by the tornado and afflicted.

26. "Tie your horse to the date-palm. Sit here and take rest, and then you will be able to listen to me in comfort."

27-29. "She gave him fruits to eat and juices to drink. After he had refreshed himself, he was further treated with her charming words which dropped like sweet nectar from her lips. 'Prince! There is that well-known sage, Vyaghrapada, and ardent devotee of Siva, by whose penance all the worlds have been transcended, and who is eagerly worshipped even by the greatest saints for his unparalleled wisdom both with regard to this and other worlds.

30. "I am his foster child - Hemalekha is my name. There was a Vidyadhari (celestial damsel) (- Vidyaprabha by name) and very beautiful.

31. "One day she came here to bathe in this river, the Vena, to which Sushena, the King of Vanga, also came at the same time.

32. "He saw the celestial beauty bathing. She was the fairest in the world, lithe in body and with the most beautiful breasts.

33. "He fell in love with her which love she returned.

34. "Their love consummated, he returned home leaving her pregnant.

35. "Afraid of slander, she caused an abortion. I was however born alive from that womb.

36. "As Vyaghrapada came to the river bank for his evening ablutions, he picked me up because of his great love for all, in order to bring me up with a mother's care.

37. "He who offers righteous protection is said to be the father. I am therefore his daughter by virtue of this and devoted to him.

38-39. "There is certainly no fear for me anywhere on earth on account of his greatness. Be they Gods or Asuras, they cannot enter this hermitage with bad motives; if they did they would only be counting their own ruin. I have now told you my story. Wait here, Prince, a little.

40. "That same lord, my foster-father, will soon be here. Salute him and hear him with humility; your desire will be fulfilled, and you may leave here in the morning.'

41. "Having heard her and becoming enamoured of her, he was silent for fear of giving offence; yet he became distressed in mind.

42-46. "Noting the prince love-stricken, that highly accomplished girl continued: 'Bravo Prince! Be steady! My father is about to come. Tell him all.' As she was saying this Vyaghrapada the great saint arrived, carrying a basket of flowers culled from the forest for worship. Seeing the sage coming, the prince rose up from his seat, prostrated before him mentioning his own name, and then took his seat as directed. The sage noticed that the man was love-stricken; taking in the whole situation by his occult powers, he pondered on what would be the best course in the circumstances; and ended by bestowing Hemalekha on the young man as his life-partner.

47-49. "The prince was filled with joy and returned with her to his own capital. Muktachuda, his father, was also very pleased and ordered festivities in the kingdom. He then had the marriage performed ceremoniously, and the loving couple passed a very happy honeymoon in the palace, in forest retreats, and in holiday resorts. But the infatuated prince noticed that Hemalekha was not as amorous as himself.

50. "Feeling that she was always unresponsive, he asked her in private: 'My dear! How is it you are not as attentive to me as I am to you?

51. "Thou fairest of girls radiant with smiles! How is it that you are never keen on seeking pleasure or enjoying it? Are not these pleasures to your taste?

52. "You look indifferent even during the greatest pleasures. How can I be happy if your interest is not awakened?

53. "Even when I am close to you, your mind seems to be elsewhere; when spoken to, you do not seem to listen.

54. "As I hold you in close embrace for a long while, you seem unconscious of me, and then ask me, 'Lord, when did you come?'

55. "None of the carefully planned arrangements seem to interest you and you do not take part in them.

56. "When I turn away from you, you remain with your eyes closed; and so you continue whenever I approach you.

57. "Tell me how I can derive pleasure with nothing but an artist's model which is what you are, seeing your indifference to all enjoyments.

58. "What does not please you cannot please me either. I am always looking to you, trying to please you like a lily looking up at the moon.

Note: - Kumuda, a certain lily, blossoms only in the night and is therefore said to be the beloved of the Moon, as the lotus blossoming in the day is said to be the beloved of the Sun.

59. "Speak, dear! Why are you like this? You are dearer to me than even life. I adjure you! Speak and so relieve my mind."

Thus ends the Third Chapter in the section on the potency of the association with the wise, in Tripura Rahasya.

CHAPTER IV

DISGUST FOR WORLDLY ENJOYMENT IS INCULCATED

SO THAT DISPASSION MIGHT BE DEVELOPED

1-3. "On hearing the sweet words of her infatuated lover, who was all the time pressing her to his bosom, that stainless girl, wishing to teach him, smiled gently and spoke with good sense as follows; 'Listen to me, O Prince. It is not that I do not love you, only that I am trying to find what the greatest joy in life is which will never become distasteful. I am always searching for it, but have not attained it as yet.

4. 'Though always looking for it, I have not reached any definite decision, as is a woman's way. Will you not kindly tell me what exactly it is and so help me ?'

5. "Being thus coaxed, Hemachuda laughed derisively and told his beloved; 'Women are indeed silly.'

6-8. "For do not even the birds and beasts, nay the crawling insects know what is good and what is bad? Otherwise, how are they guided in the pursuit of good, and how do they escape from bad? That which is pleasing is clearly good and that which is not so, is bad. What is there in it, my dear, that you are always given to thinking about it? Is it not silly?' Hearing her lover speak thus, Hemalekha continued:

9. "True that women are silly and cannot judge rightly. Therefore should I be taught by you, the right discerner.

10. "On being rightly taught by you, I shall stop thinking like that. Also, I shall then be able to share in your pleasures to your entire satisfaction.

11. "O King, subtle judge that you are, you have found happiness and misery to be the results of what is pleasing or otherwise.

12. "The same object yields pleasure or pain according to circumstances. Where is then the finality in your statement?

13. "Take fire for example. Its results vary according to seasons, the places and its own size or intensity.

14. "It is agreeable in cold seasons and disagreeable in hot seasons. Pleasure and pain are, therefore, functions of seasons; similarly of latitudes and altitudes.

15. "Again, fire is good for people of certain constitutions only and not for others. Still again, pleasure and pain depend on circumstances.

16-17. "The same reasoning applies to cold, to riches, to sons, to wife, to kingdom and so on. See how your father, the Maharaja, is daily worried even though he is surrounded by wife, children and wealth. Why do not others grieve like this? What has happened to enjoyments in his case? He is certainly on the look-out for happiness; are not his resources all directed to that end?

18. "No one seems to possess everything that is sufficient for happiness. The question arises: Cannot a man be happy, even with such limited means? I shall give you the answer.

19. "That cannot be happiness, my Lord, which is tinged with misery. Misery is of two kinds, external and internal.

20. "The former pertain to the body and is caused by the nerves, etc., the latter pertains to the mind and is caused by desire.

21. "Mental distraction is worse than physical pain and the whole world has fallen a victim to it. Desire is the seed of the tree of misery and never fails in its fruits.

22. "Overpowered by it, Indra and the Devas, though living in celestial regions of enjoyment and fed by nectar, are still slaves to it and work day and night according to its dictates.

23. "Respite gained by the fulfilment of one desire before another takes its place, is not happiness because the seeds of pain are still latent. Such respite is enjoyed by the insects also (which certainly do not typify perfect happiness).

24. "Yet is their enjoyment distinctly better than that of men because their desires are less complex.

25. "If it is happiness to have one desire among many fulfilled who will not be thus happy in this world?

26. "If a man, scalded all over, can find happiness by smearing unguents on himself, then everyone must be happy.

27. "A man is happy when embraced by his beloved; he is unhappy in the same act under other circumstances.

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30. "..... Or do you mean to say that the enjoyment of man is enhanced by his sense of beauty?

31. "Beauty is only a mental concept, as is evident from the similar feeling in similar enjoyments of lovers in dreams. (I shall tell you a story to illustrate the point.) There was once a most handsome scion of a king - fairer than Cupid himself.

32. "He was wedded to an equally beautiful damsel and was very devoted to her.

33. "But she fell in love with a servant of the royal household who deceived the young prince very skilfully.

34. "This servant used to serve liquor in excess so that the prince got drunk and lost his senses, on retiring, a willy harlot was sent to keep him company.

35-38. "The unchaste princess and the servant were then able to carry on; and the foolish prince was embracing the other woman in his intoxication. Yet he thought within himself that he was the happiest of men to have such an angel for his wife who was so devoted to him. After a long time, it happened that the servant in the pressure of work left the liquor on the prince's table and occupied himself otherwise. The prince did not drink as much as usual.

39-42. "Becoming voluptuous, he hastily retired to his bed-room, which was sumptuously furnished, and enjoyed himself with the strumpet, without recognising her in the heat of passion. After some time, he noticed that she was not his wife and on this confusion asked her 'where is my beloved wife?'

43-48. "She trembled in fear and remained silent. The prince, who suspected foul play, flew into a rage and holding her by her hair drew his sword and thus threat-ended her, 'Speak the truth or your life will not be worth a moment's purchase.' Afraid of being killed, she confessed the whole truth, taking him to the trysting-place of the princess. There he found her with her lovely and delicate body in close and loving embrace of the dark, ugly, loathsome savage who was his servant.....

51. "The prince was shocked at the sight.

52. "Shortly afterwards he pulled himself together and began to reflect as follows: 'Shame on me who am so addicted to drink!

53. "Shame on the fools infatuated with love for women. Women are like nothing but birds flitting above the tree tops.

54. "Ass that I was, all the time loving her even more than life.

55. "Women are only good for the enjoyment of lecherous fools. He who loves them is a wild ass.

56. "Women's good faith is more fleeting than streaks of autumnal clouds.

57-59. "I had not till now understood the woman who, unfaithful to me entirely devoted, was in illicit love with a savage, all the time feigning love to me, like a prostitute to a lecherous fool.

60. "I did not in my drunkenness suspect her in the least; on the other hand, I believed that she was as much with me as my own shadow.

61-64. "Fie! is there a fool worse than myself, who was deceived by this ugly harlort at my side and enthralled by her professions of love? Again, what has the other woman found in preference to me in a loathsome brute?

65. "The prince then left society in disgust and retired into a forest." (Hemalekha continued). "So you see, O Prince, how beauty is only a concept of the mind.

66. "What pleasure you have in your apprehension of beauty in me, is sometimes even exceeded by others in their love of their dear ones - be they fair or ugly. I will tell you what I think of it.

67. "The fair woman that appears as the object is only the reflection of the subtle concept already in the subjective mind.

68-69. "The mind draws an image of her beauty in conformity with its own repeated conceptions. The repeatedly drawn image becomes clearer and clearer until it appears solidly as the object. An attraction springs up (and enslaves the mind) by constant mental associations.

70. "The mind, becoming restless, stirs up the senses and seeks the fulfilment of its desires in the object; a composed mind is not excited even at the sight of the fairest.

71. "The reason for the infatuation is the oftrepeated mental picture. Neither children nor self-controlled yogis are excited in the same way (because their minds do not dwell on such things).

72. "So whoever finds pleasure in anything, the beauty therein is only mental imagery.

73. "Ugly and loathsome women too are looked upon as delightful angels by their husbands.

74. "If the mind conceives anything as loathsome and not delightful, there will be no pleasure in such.

75. "Fie on human beings who appraise the foulest part of the body as the most delightful.

* * * *

77. "Listen Prince! the idea of beauty lies in one's own desire innate in the mind.

78. "If, on the other hand, beauty is natural to the object of love, why is it not recognised by children too, as sweetness in edibles is recognised by them?

79-81. "The form, the stature and complexion of people differ in different countries and at different times; their ears may be long; their faces distorted; their teeth large; their nose prominent; bodies hirsute or smooth, their hair red, black, or golden, light or thick, smooth or curly; their complexion fair, dark, coppery, yellow or grey.

82. "All of them derive the same kind of pleasure as you, Prince!

83. "Even the most accomplished among men have fallen into the habit of seeking pleasure from woman, for all consider her the best hunting ground for delight.

84. "Similarly also a man's body is thought by woman to be the highest source of enjoyment. But consider the matter well, Prince!

85-86. "Shaped of fat and flesh, filled with blood, topped by the head, covered by skin, ribbed by bones, covered with hair, containing bile and phlegm, a pitcher of faeces and urine, generated from semen and ova, and born from the womb, such is the body. Just think of it!

87. "Finding delight in such a thing, how are men any better than worms growing in offal?

88. "My King! Is not this body (pointing to herself) dear to you? Think well over each part thereof.

89. "Analyse well and carefully what it is that forms your food materials with their different flavours, kinds and consistencies?

90. "Every one knows how the consumed foods are finally ejected from the body.

91. "Such being the state of affairs in the world, tell me what is agreeable or otherwise."

"On hearing all this, Hemachuda developed disgust for earthly pleasures.

92. "He was amazed at the strange discourse he heard. He later pondered over all that Hemalekha had said.

93. "His disgust for earthly pleasures grew in volume and in force. He again and again discussed matters with his beloved so that he understood the ultimate truth.

94. "Then realising the pure consciousness inhering as the Self to be that self-same Tripura, he became aware of the One Self holding all, and was liberated.

95. "He was liberated while yet alive. His brother Manichuda and his father Muktachuda were both guided by him and were also liberated.

96. "The queen was guided by her daughter-in-law and was liberated; so also did the ministers, chieftains and citizens gain wisdom.

97. "There was no one born in that city who remained ignorant. The city was like that of Brahma, the abode of happy, peaceful and contented people.

98. "It was known as Visala and became the most renowned on Earth, where even the parrots in the cages used to repeat: 'Meditate, O Man, on the Self, the Absolute

Consciousness devoid of objects! There is naught else to know besides pure consciousness; it is like a self-luminous mirror reflecting objects within.

100. "'That same consciousness is also the objects, that is the subject, and that is all - the mobile and the immobile; all else shine in its reflected light; it shines of itself.

101. "'Therefore, O Man, throw off delusion! Think of that consciousness which is alone, illuminating all and pervading all. Be of clear vision.

102-103. "Those holy saints Vamadeva and others having on one occasion heard these sacred words of the parrots, wondered at the wisdom of even the birds of that city and named it the City of Wisdom.

104. "The city is to-day still called by that name," Dattatreya continued. "Association with the sages, O Rama, is thus the root cause of all that is auspicious and good.

105. "By association with Hemalekha, all people gained jnana (wisdom). Know then, the satsanga (association with the wise) is alone the root cause of salvation'."

Thus ends the Fourth Chapter on the fruits ot satsanga in the Section of Hemachuda in Tripura Rahasya.

CHAPTER V

ON BONDAGE AND RELEASE

1. Parasurama, on hearing the master's discourse on the greatness of satsanga, was highly pleased and continued to ask.

2. "You have truly said, O Lord, that satsanga is the harbinger of all that is worthy, and illustrated the fact with a story.

3. "One's enjoyments are determined by the quality of one's company. The highest good was accomplished by all owing to their association direct or indirect, with Hemalekha, though she was only a woman.

4. "I am anxious to hear how Hemachuda was further guided by her. Please tell me, Thou Lord of Mercy!"

5. Thus requested, Dattatreya said to Parasurama: "Listen, O Bhargava, I shall now continue the holy narrative.

6. "Having heard what she had to say, the enjoyments ceased to interest him, he developed a disgust for them, and became pensive.

7. "But the force of habit still remained with him. He was therefore unable either to enjoy himself or to desist all of a sudden.

8. "He was however too proud to confess his weakness to his beloved. Some time passed in this way.

9. "When his habits forced him into the old ways he was still mindful of his wife's words, so that he engaged himself in them with reluctance and shame.

10-11. "He repeatedly fell into his old ways by force of habit; and very often he became repentant, realising the evil of those ways and remembering his wife's wise words. His mind was thus moving to and fro, like a swing.

12. "Neither delicious foods, nor fine clothes, nor rich jewels, nor charming damsels nor caparisoned horses, nor even his dear friends continued to interest him.

13-14. "He became sad as if he had lost his all. He was unable to resist his habits at once nor was he willing to follow them knowingly. He grew pale and melancholy.

15. "Hemalekha, always aware of the change in him, went to him in his private chamber and said, "How is it, my Lord, that you are not as cheerful as before?

16. "You look sad. Why so? I do not see symptoms of any particular ailment in you.

17. "Doctors may hold out the fear of disease amidst the pleasure of life; diseases are due to loss of harmony in the three tempers of the body.

18. "Diseases remain latent in all bodies because disharmony of tempers cannot always be prevented.

19. "Tempers get displaced by food consumed, clothes worn, words uttered or heard, sights seen, objects contacted, changes of seasons and travel in different countries.

20. "Being inescapable, the dislocation of tempers need not claim one's constant attention. There are remedies prescribed for diseases arising from it.

21. ... diseases. Now tell me, dear, why you are so sad."

22. "When Hemalekha had finished, the prince replied, 'I will tell you the cause of my misery. Listen to we, dear.'

23. "'What you said on the last occasion has barred all means of pleasure for me, so that I can now find nothing to make me happy.

24. "'Just as a man under orders to be executed cannot relish the luxuries provided for him by the State, so also I do not relish anything.

25. "'Just as a man is forced by royal command to do something in spite of himself, so also must I engage in old ways by force of habit. Now I ask you, dear, tell me how I can gain happiness.'

26. "Being thus approached, Hemalekha thought: 'This dispassion is certainly due to my words.

27. "'There is the seed of the highest good in that field where such symptoms appear. Had my well-calculated words not produced even the slightest turn in this direction, there would be no hope of emancipating him. This state of dispassion only arises in one with whose continued devotion Tripura inherent in the Heart as the Self, is well pleased."

Thinking thus, that wise lady was eager to reveal wisdom to her husband.

30. "Keeping her own wisdom secret at the same time, she spoke with measured words: 'Listen, Prince, to the story of my own past.

31. "My mother formerly gave me a lady-in-waiting who was good by nature, but later associated with an undesirable friend.

32. "This friend was clever in creating new and wonderful things. I also without my mother's knowledge associated with her.

33. "That lady-in-waiting became very friendly with that undesirable companion, and I was obliged to do the same because I loved my friend more than life.

34. "For, I could not remain without her even for a second; so much did she enthral me by her undoubted purity.

35. "Always loving my friend, I quickly became part of herself. She for her part was all the time close to her friend, a wicked strumpet, who was ever generating new and fascinating things.

36-38. "In secret that woman introduced her son to my friend. That son was an ignorant fool with eyes blood-shot with drink. And my friend went on enjoying him in my very presence. But she, though completely overpowered by him and being enjoyed by him day after day, never left me, and I, too, did not abandon her. And out of that union was born a fool of the same type as his father.

39-41. "He grew up to be a very restless young fellow, fully inheriting his father's dullness and his grandmother's wickedness and creativeness. This boy, Mr. Inconstant by name, was brought up and trained by his father, Mr. Fool and his grandmother Madame Ignorance, and he became skilled in their ways. He could negotiate the most difficult places with perfect ease and surmount obstacles in a trice.

42. "In this manner, my friend, though very good by nature, became afflicted and silly because of her association with wicked people.

43-44. "What with love for her friend, devotion for her lover, and affection for her son, she began gradually to forsake me. But I could not break with her so easily.

45-46. "Not being self-reliant, I was dependent on her so remained with her. Her husband, Mr. Fool, though always in enjoyment of her, mistook me for one of the same sort and tried to ravish me. But I was not what he took me to be. I am pure by nature and only led by her, for the time being.

47. "Even so, there was wide-spread scandal about me in the world, that I was always in Mr. Fool's hold.

48. "My friend, entrusting her son Mr. Inconstant to me, was always in the company of her lover.

49. "Mr. Inconstant grew up in my care and in due course married a wife with his mother's approval.

50. "Unsteady by name, she was ever restless and changeful and could put on different forms to please her husband's whim.

51. "By her wonderful capacity to change and by her exceeding skill and cleverness, she brought her husband completely under her control.

52. "Mr. Inconstant, too, used to fly hundreds of miles in a twinkling and return, go here, there and everywhere, but yet could find no rest.

53-54. "Whenever Mr. Inconstant wished to go anywhere and whatever he wanted to have in any measure, Madame Unsteady was ready to meet his desires changing herself accordingly and creating new environments to please her husband. She thus won his affection entirely.

55. "She bore him five sons who were devoted to their parents. Each one was skilled in his own way. They were also entrusted to my care by my friend.

56-61. "Out of love for my friend, I brought them up with care, and made them strong. Then those five sons of Madame Unsteady individually erected splendid palaces, invited their father to their homes and entertained him continually in turns. The eldest of them

entertained him in his mansion with different kinds of sweet music, with incantations of the Vedas, the reading of scriptures, the humming sounds of bees, the twittering of birds and other sounds sweet to hear.

62-64. "The father was pleased with the son, who arranged for still further sounds for him which were harsh, fearful and tumultuous like the roar of the lion, the peal of thunder, the raging of the sea, the rumblings of earthquakes, the cries from lying-in-chambers, and the quarrels, moans and lamentations of many people.

65-67. "Invited by his second son, the father went to stay in his mansion. There he found soft seats, downy beds, fine clothes and some hard things, others hot or warm or cold, or refreshing things with various designs, and so on. He was pleased with the agreeable things and felt aversion to the disagreeable ones.

68. "Then going to the third son, he saw charming and variegated scenes, things red, white, brown, blue, yellow, pink, smoky grey, tawny, red-brown, black and spotted, others fat or lean, short or long, broad or round, bent or wavy, pleasing or horrible, nauseous, brilliant or savage, unsightly or captivating, some pleasing and others otherwise.

72. "The father was taken to the fourth son's mansion and there he had fruits and flowers to order. He had drinks, things to be licked, to be sucked, and to be masticated, juicy things, some refreshing like nectar, others sweet, sour, pungent or astringent, some decoctions of similar flavours, and so on. He tasted them all.

76-79. "The last son took the father to his home and treated him with fruits and flowers, with various scented grasses, herbs and things of different odours, sweet or putrescent, mild or acrid, others stimulating or soporific and so on.

"In this manner, he enjoyed himself uninterruptedly, one way or another, in one mansion or another, being pleased with some and repulsed by others.

80. "The sons too were so devoted to their father that they would not touch anything themselves in his absence.

81. "But Mr. Inconstant not only enjoyed himself thoroughly in his sons' mansions, but also stole away things from them and shared them in secret with his dear wife, Madam Unsteady, in his own home, unknown to his sons.

83. "Later, one Vorax fell in love with Mr. Inconstant and he wedded her; they became very devoted to each other, Mr. Inconstant loved Madam Vorax heart and soul.

84-87. "He used to fetch enormous provisions for her, she consumed them all in a moment and was still hungry for more; therefore she kept her husband always on his legs, to collect her food; and, too, he was incessantly in quest of provision for her. She was not satisfied with the service of the father and his five sons put together, but wanted still

more. Such was her insatiable hunger. She used to order all of them about for her needs. In a short time she gave birth to two sons.

88. "They were Master Flaming-mouth the elder and Master Mean the younger - both of course very dear to their mother.

89-91. "Whenever Mr. Inconstant sought Madam Vorax in privacy, his body was burnt by the wrathsome flames of Master Flaming-mouth; being thus afflicted, he fell down unconscious.

"Again, whenever he fondled the younger son out of his love, he was hated by all the world and he himself became as if dead. Mr. Inconstant thus experienced untold misery.

92. "Then my companion, good by nature, was herself afflicted because of her son Mr. Inconstant's grief.

93-95. "Being also associated with her two grandsons, Mr. Flaming-mouth and Mr. Mean, she became quite miserable and gave way under the public odium. I too, dear, collapsed in sympathy with her. Thus passed several years until Mr. Inconstant dominated by Madam Vorax lost all initiative and was entirely in her hands.

96-107. "He was foredoomed and betook himself to the city of ten gates. There he lived with Madam Vorax his sons and his mother, always seeking pleasure but only sharing misery day and night. Burnt by the wrath of Flaming-mouth and treated with contempt by Mr. Mean, he swung hither and thither greatly agitated. He went into the homes of his other five sons but was only perplexed, without being happy. My companion too was so affected by her son's plight that she again collapsed, and yet she continued to live in the same city. Madam Vorax with her two boys Mr. Flaming-mouth and Mr. Mean was being fed by Madam Ignorance - her husband's grandmother, and by Mr. Fool, her father-in-law. She got on well with her co-wife Madam Unsteady and was even intimate with her. (Ingratiating herself with all of them), she completely dominated her husband Mr. Inconstant.

* * * *

"I too continued to live there because of my love for my friend. Otherwise, none of them could remain in the town without me who was their protectress, though I was moribund owing to my friend's moribundity.

"I was sometimes suppressed by Madam Ignorance, was made a fool of by Mr. Fool, became inconstant on account of Mr. Inconstant, grew unsteady with Madam Unsteady, contacted wrath with Flaming-mouth and looked contemptible with Mr. Mean. I reflected within myself all the moods of my friend, for she would have died if I had left her even a minute. Because of my company, the common people always misjudged me for a strumpet, whereas discriminating men could see that I have always remained pure.

108-111. "For that Supreme Good One, my mother, is ever pure and clear, more extensive than space and subtler than the subtlest; she is omniscient, yet of limited knowledge; she works all, yet remains inactive; she holds all, herself being unsupported; all depend on her, and she is independent; all forms are hers, but she is formless; all belong to her, but she is unattached; though illumining all, she is not known to any one under any circumstances; she is Bliss, yet not blissful; she has no father nor mother; innumerable are her daughters, like me.

112-113. "My sisters are as many as the waves on the sea. All of them, O Prince, are just like me involved in their companions' affairs. Though sharing the lives of my friends, I am in possession of the most potent spell, by virtue of which I am also exactly like my mother in nature.

114. (The tale is resumed.)

115. "When my friend's son retired to rest, he always slept soundly on the lap of his mother; as Mr. Inconstant was asleep, all others, including his sons, were also asleep, for no one could remain awake.

116. "On such occasions, the city was guarded by Mr. Motion, the intimate friend of Mr. Inconstant, who was always moving to and fro by two upper gateways.

117. "My friend, the mother of Mr. Inconstant, along with him and her wicked friend - the same was her mother-in-law - watched the whole sleeping family.

118. "I used to seek my mother in that interval and remain blissful in her fond embrace. But I was obliged to return to the city simultaneously with the waking of the sleepers.

119. "This Mr. Motion, the friend of Mr. Inconstant, is most powerful and keeps them all alive.

120-121. "Though single, he multiplies himself, manifests as the city and citizens, pervades them all, protects and holds them.

122. "Without him, they would all be scattered and lost like pearls without the string of the necklace.

123. "He is the bond between the inmates and myself; empowered by me, he serves in the city as the string in a necklace.

124. "If that city decays, he collects the inmates together, leads them to another and remains their master.

125-131. "In this way Mr. Inconstant rules over cities always, he himself remaining under the sway of his friend. Though supported by such a powerful friend, though born of such a virtuous mother and brought up by me, he is never otherwise than miserable, because

he is tossed about by his two wives and several sons. He is torn asunder by his sons and finds not the least pleasure but only intense misery. Tempted by Madame Unsteady, he grieves; ordered about by Madam Vorax, he runs about in search of food for her; stricken by Flaming-mouth he burns with rage, loses his sense and is baffled; approaching Mr. Mean, he is openly despised and reviled by others and becomes as one dead under shame of odium.

132-134. "Already of disreputable heredity, and now infatuated by love for, and tossed about by his wicked wives and sons, he has been living with them in all kinds of places, good or bad, in forests with woods or thorny bushes and infested with wild beasts, in deserts burning hot, in icy tracts pierced by cold, in putrid ditches or in dark holes and so on.

135. "Again and again my friend was stricken with grief on account of her son's calamities and nearly died with sorrow.

136. "I too, though sane and clear by nature, dear, got involved in the affairs of her family and became sad also.

137. "Who can hope for even the least happiness in bad company? One may as well seek to quench one's thirst by drinking water from a mirage.

138. "Engulfed in sorrow, my friend once sought me in private.

139. "Advised by me, she soon gained a good husband, killed her own son and imprisoned his sons.

140. "Then accompanied by me, she quickly gained my mother's presence, and being pure, she often embraced my mother.

141. "She at once dived in the sea of Bliss and became Bliss itself. In the same manner, you too can conquer your wrong ways which are only accretions.

142. "Then, my Lord, attain the mother and gain eternal happiness. I have now related to you, my Lord, my own experience the pedestal of Bliss'."

Thus ends the Chapter on Bondage in the Section of Hemachuda in Tripura Rahasya.

CHAPTER VI

ON THE MERITS OF FAITH FOR GAINING THE GOAL AND

ON THE HARMFULNESS OF DRY POLEMICS

1. Hemachuda was astonished at the fantastic tale of his beloved. Being ignorant, he smiled derisively at the tale and asked that wise princess:

2. "My dear, what you have been saying seems to be nothing but invention. Your words have no relation to facts and are altogether meaningless.

3. "You are certainly the daughter of an Apsaras (celestial damsel), and brought up by Rishi Vyagrapada in the forest; you are still young and not yet fully grown.

4. "But you talk as if you were several generations old. Your long-winded speech is like that of a girl possessed and not in her senses.

5. "I cannot believe that rigmarole. Tell me where your companion is and who is the son she killed.

6. "Where are those cities? What is the significance of your story? Where is your friend?

7. "I know nothing of your lady-in-waiting. You may ask my mother if you like. There is no other lady besides your mother-in-law in my father's place.

8. "Tell me quickly where such a lady is to be found and where her son's sons are. I think your tale is a myth like the tale of a barren woman's son.

9-11. "A clown once related a story that a barren woman's son mounted a chariot reflected in a mirror and decorated with silver taken from the sheen of mother-of-pearl, armed himself with weapons made of human horn, fought in the battle-field of the sky, killed the future king, subdued the city of aerial hosts and enjoyed himself with dream maidens on the banks of the waters of a mirage.

12. "I take your words to mean something similar. They can never be the truth." After listening to the words of her lover, the wise girl continued:

13. "Lord, how can you say that my parable is meaningless? Words from the lips of those like me can never be nonsense.

14. "Falsehood undermines the effects of one's penance; so how can it be suspected in virtuous people? How can such a one be stainless and numbered among the sages?

15. "Moreover, one who entertains an earnest seeker with hollow or false words, will not prosper in this world nor advance in the next.

16. "Listen, Prince. A purblind man cannot have his eye-sight restored by merely hearing the prescription read.

17. "He is a fool who misjudges good precepts for falsehood. Do you think, my dear, that I, your wife, would deceive you with a myth when you are so much in earnest?

18-19. "Reason well and carefully examine these apparent untruths of mine. Is not an intelligent man accustomed to judge big things in the world by verifying a few details in them? I now present you my credentials.

20. "Some things used to please you before. Why did they cease to do so, after you heard me on the last occasion?

21. "My words brought about dispassion; they are similarly bound to do so even more in future. How else can it be? Judge your own statements from these facts.

22. "Listen to me, King, with an unsophisticated and clear intellect. Mistrust in a well-wisher's words is the surest way to ruin.

23. "Faith is like a fond mother who can never fail to save her trusting son from dangerous situations. There is no doubt about it.

24. "The fool who has no faith in his well-wisher's words is forsaken by prosperity, happiness and fame. A man who is always suspicious can never gain anything worthwhile.

25. "Confidence holds the world and nourishes all. How can a babe thrive if it has no confidence in its mother?

26. "How can a lover gain pleasure if he does not trust his beloved? Similarly, how is the aged parent to be happy who has no confidence in his sons?

27. "Would the husbandman till the land, if he had no confidence? Mutual distrust will put an end to all transactions.

28. "How can humanity exist without universal confidence? If you should say, on the other hand, that it is the law of cause and effect, I will tell you; listen to me.

29. "People believe in the law that such a cause produces such a result. Is that not faith?

30. "So then, a man will not dare to breathe in the absence of Sraddha (faith) for fear of pathogenic infection, and consequently perish. Therefore believe before you aspire for supreme beatitude.

31. "If again, Prince, you hesitate to depend on an incompetent person, as you may think me to be, that is because you believe that a certain end must be accomplished.

32. "How else can the desired end be approached?" Hearing his beloved's arguments, Hemachuda said to the fair speaker:

33. "If faith should be placed on any one, my dear, it should certainly be placed on those worthy of it, in order that one's ends may be served.

34-35. "He who is bent on the highest good should never trust an incompetent person. Otherwise, he comes to grief, like a fish attracted by the tempting bait at the end of a fishing line. Therefore, faith can only be put in the worthy and not in the unworthy.

36. "Fishes and all those men who have ruined themselves in the one way and prospered in the other, can verify my statement.

37. "I can only believe you therefore after full ascertainment of your worth; not otherwise. Why then do you ask me if the desired end can be approached?" (vide sloka 32 ante.)

38. After hearing him, Hemalekha replied: "Listen, Prince, to what I am going to say now.

39. "I answer your point. How is one to be judged, whether one is good or bad?

40. "Is it by reference to accepted standards? What is the authority behind such standards? Are the authors themselves worthy or unworthy? In this way, there will be no end to argument.

41. "Moreover, the observer's competence must be taken into account. (Thus, too, there will be no finality reached.) Therefore life moves by faith only.

42-45. "I shall tell you the rationale of reaching the Supreme Goal by means of faith. Be attentive. People will not gain anything, either during their life-time or after death, by endless discussions or blind acceptance. Of the two, however, there is hope for the latter and there is none for the former."

(The following anecdote illustrates the point.)

"Once there lived a saint, by name Kausika, on the Sahya Hill near the banks of the Godavari.

46. "He was serene, pure, pious, having knowledge of the Supreme Truth. Several disciples attended on him.

47. "Once when the master had gone out, the disciples started to discuss philosophy, according to their own lights.

48. "There appeared on the scene a Brahmin of great intellect and wide learning, Soonga by name, who successfully refuted all their arguments by his skill in logic.

49-50. "He was a man without faith and without conviction, but an able debater. When they said that the truth must be ascertained by reference to some standard, he argued on the basis of an unending series of standards and refuted them.

51-55. "He rounded off his speech with the following: 'Listen, you Brahmins, standards are not applicable for ascertaining merits or demerits and so arriving at the truth. For erroneous standards are no good as tests. To start with, their correctness must be established. Other standards are required to check them. Are they in their turn infallible? Proceeding in this way, no finality can be reached. Therefore no tests are possible. Ascertainment of Truth being impossible without being tested, nothing can therefore be Truth. This enunciation itself cannot be true, nor the enunciator either. What then is the decision arrived at? That all are nothing, void. This too cannot be supported by reliable facts; hence, the statement that all are void ends in void also.'

56. "Hearing his discourse, some of them were impressed by the force of Soonga's logic and became scholiasts of the void.

57-60. "They got lost in the maze of their philosophy. The discriminating ones among the hearers placed Soonga's arguments before their master and were enlightened by him. Thus they gained peace and happiness. Therefore, beware of arid polemics parading as logic. Use it in the manner in which the holy books have done. That way lies the salvation." Thus addressed by that eminent heroine, Hemachuda was greatly astonished and said: "My dear, I did not realise your sublimity earlier.

61. "Blessed are you that you are so wise! Blessed am I that I have fallen into your company. You say that faith bestows the highest good. How does it do so?

62-63. "Where is faith expedient, and where not? The scriptures differ in their teachings; the teachers differ among themselves; the commentaries similarly differ from one another; to add to this, one's reasoning is no guide. Which of them is to be followed and which rejected?

64. "Each one stamps his own views with the seal of authority and condemns the rest, not only as worthless but also as harmful, my dear!

65. "That being the case, I cannot decide for myself. What you condemned as the school of the void turns round on others and attacks them.

66. "Why should not that school be respected? It has its own adherents and its own system of philosophy. Explain to me, dear, all these things clearly. They must indeed be already clear to you."

Thus ends the Chapter VI on Sraddha (Faith) in Hemachuda Section in Tripura Rahasya.

CHAPTER VII

THAT THE GOAL IS GAINED ONLY AFTER ASCERTAINING GOD

BY FAITH, EFFORT AND APPROVED LOGIC, AND DEVOTION TO HIM

1. When Hemalekha was thus asked by her husband, she with her saintly practical knowledge of the state of the universe, spoke to him with increased kindness:

2-5. "Dearest, listen to me attentively. What is known as the mind is, after all, always like a restless monkey. So the ordinary man is always afflicted with troubles. Everybody knows that a restless mind is the channel of endless troubles; whereas one is happy in sleep in the absence of such restlessness. Therefore keep your mind steady when you listen to what I say. Hearing with a distracted mind is as good as not hearing, for the words serve no useful purpose, resembling the fruit-laden tree seen in a painting.

6. "Man is quickly benefited if he turns away from dry, ruinous logic and engages in purposeful discussion.

7. "Appropriate effort must follow right discussion; for a man profits according to the zeal accompanying his efforts.

8. "You find, my dear, that aimless discussions are fruitless and that earnest efforts are fruitful in the world.

9. "Discriminating zeal is what enables the husband-man to plough the field in season and the assayer to assay the worth of gold, silver, precious stones, medicinal herbs and the rest. No practical work will be done if people spend all their lives in vain discussions alone. Therefore, one should discard aimless talk and begin immediately to accomplish the highest aim of life as ascertained by appropriate sincere discussion. Nor should one refrain from individual effort, as is the wont of the followers of Soonga.

12. "A man who is in earnest need never be at a loss; will sustained effort ever fail in its purpose?

13. "Men earn their food, gods their nectar, pious ascetics the highest beatitude and others their desires, by individual exertion alone.

14. "Think well and tell me where, when, how and what profit was ever gained by any man who without engaging in action was taken up with dry polemics.

15. "If some stray cases of failure should make one lose faith in individual exertion, that one is certainly accursed of God, because he is his own ruin.

16. "Guided by proper deliberation, accompanied by zeal and engaged in individual efforts, one must take one's own unfailing way to emancipation.

17. "There are said to be many ways to that end. Choose that one among them which is the surest.

18. "Choice is made by right discussion and according to the experience of the wise. Then begin the practice immediately. I shall now explain them in detail. Attend.

19. "That is best which does not again yoke you to suffering. To a discriminating man, pain is apparent in all aspects of life.

20-22. "Whatever has the impress of misery on it cannot be good. Such are wealth, children, wife, kingdom, treasury, army, fame, learning, intellect, body, beauty and prosperity. For they are all of them transient and already in the jaws of death, otherwise called time.

23. "Can that be good which is only the seed ready to sprout as pain and grow into misery?

24. "The right means lies beyond these. However, the desire to possess them is born of delusion. The Master Wizard is Mahesvara. He being the creator of the universe, all are deluded by Him.

25-30. "Even a juggler of limited powers is able to deceive his audience although only to a limited degree. The majesty cannot be seen through without reference to him. Of course, the whole audience will not be deluded by him, but who can escape the illusion of Mahadeva?

"Just as there are a few who know how to see through the illusory tricks of the juggler and are not mystified by them, so also men can learn to overcome the universal Maya (illusion) if only the Lord is gracious to them. They can never escape from Maya, without His grace.

"Therefore he should be worshipped by those who are anxious to cross the Ocean of Maya.

31. "He with whom God is graciously pleased is endowed with Mahavidya, the supreme knowledge by means of which his crossing of the Ocean of Maya is certain.

32. "Other methods are also put forward as serving this supreme end, but they are bound to fail in their purpose if the Lord's grace be not forthcoming.

33. "Therefore worship the Primal Cause of the universe as the starting point; be devoted to Him; He will soon enable you to succeed in your attempts to destroy the illusion.

34. "Clearly the universe must have some origin.

35. "Although the origin is shrouded in mystery, let us investigate the cause from the visible effect and be guided by the holy scriptures; and then the conclusion will be reached that there is a Creator in no way comparable to any known agents.

36. "Contentious statements to the contrary have been logically refuted by many authoritative scriptural texts.

37. "That system which admits only sensory evidence is merely an apology for philosophy and leads nowhere. Salvation is not its end but damnation is its fruit.

38-40. "Dry logic also must be condemned. Another system declares that the universe is eternal, without beginning or end. It follows that the universe and its phenomena are self-existent; thus lifeless insentient matter is its own agent and keeper, which is absurd, because action implies intelligence and no example can be cited to the contrary. Scriptures also say that the Primal Cause is an intelligent principle, and we know that action always originates from an intelligent source alone.

41-43. "The world is thus traced to its Creator who differs entirely from any agent known to us. Judging from the magnitude of the creation, His power must be immeasurable in the same proportion as the unimaginable vastness of the creation. Such a one must also be able to protect and elevate His own creatures. Surrender therefore unreservedly unto Him.

44-50. "I shall adduce an example as a proof of this. We find in every-day life that a chief, if pleased, even though his means are limited, always ensures the prospects of the man who is sincerely devoted to him.

"If the Lord of the world be pleased, will anything be withheld from the devotee? Tell me. He is the only Solace of the devotees whereas the chiefs are many in the world and not necessarily kind; may be they are cruel and ungrateful also. Their patronage is also wavering and short-lived. The Supreme Lord has infinite mercy for His devotees, is most grateful and has unlimited powers. Otherwise, would people continue to worship Him from untold ages? Kingdoms not well ordered are known to disintegrate. (But this universe continues as ever). Therefore this Lord of mercy is well established and also rightly famed.

"Surrender yourself directly and unhesitatingly to him. He will ordain the best for you and you need not ask for it.

51-59. "Among the methods of approach to God, there are (1) worship to overcome troubles, (2) worship to gain wealth, etc., and (3) loving dedication of oneself. The last one is the best and surest in its results.

"In practical life too, a chief entreated by a man in trouble duly affords him relief. The man is however unhelped if he has not shown proper attention to the patron. So also the service born of ambition, bears indeterminate and limited fruits according to its intensity. Devoted service with no ulterior motive takes a long time to be recognised; yet it makes even the petty chief amiable. A human master may take long to recognise unselfish work; but God, the Lord of the universe, the Dweller in our hearts, knows everything and soon bestows appropriate fruits. In the case of other kinds of devotees, God has to await the course of destiny - that being His own ordainment; whereas for the selfless devotee, God, the Lord and the sole Refuge, is all in all and takes care of him without reference to the devotee's predestiny or His own ordained laws. He compensates the devotee quickly, and that is because He is supreme and self-contained without depending on anything else.

60-61. "Predestiny or divine will is powerless before Him. Every one knows how He set aside predestiny and divine laws in the case of His famous devotee, Markandeya. I will explain to you now the fitness of this. Listen, my dearest!

Note: - A rishi Mrikandu, by name, who was childless, pleased Siva by his penance. When Siva appeared to him, he prayed that a son might be born to him. Siva asked him if he would have a dull boy long-lived, or a sharp boy short-lived. Mrikandu preferred the latter. So Siva said: 'You will have a very brilliant son; but he will only live for sixteen years.' Accordingly a son was born who was very good and dutiful, and most intelligent and pious, charming all who saw him. The parents were delighted with him but grew sad as he grew up. He asked them the reason for their sadness and they told him of Siva's boon. He said, 'Never mind. I will see' and took to penance. Siva was pleased with his intense devotion, and ordained that he should remain sixteen years of age for all eternity.

62. "The current notion that one cannot escape one's destiny is applicable only to weak-minded and senseless wastrels.

63. "Yogis who practise control of breath conquer fate. Even fate cannot impose its fruits on yogis.

64-66. "Destiny seizes and holds only senseless people. Conforming to and following nature, destiny forms part of nature. Nature again is only the contrivance for enforcing God's will. His purpose is always sure and cannot be prevented. Its edge can, however, be blunted by devotion to Him and if it is not so blunted, the predisposing cause must therefore be considered a most powerful factor in a man's life.

67. "Therefore, eschew high vanity and take refuge in Him. He will spontaneously take you to the Highest State.

68. "This is the first rung in the ladder to the pedestal of Bliss. Nothing else is worth while.

69. (Dattatreya continued) "O Parasurama, hearing this speech of his wife, Hemachuda, was delighted and continued to ask her:

70. "Tell me, dear, who is this God, the Creator, the Self-contained One and the Ordainer of the universe to whom I should consecrate myself.

71-72. "Some say He is Vishnu, others Siva, Ganesa, the Sun, Narasimha or similar other avatars; others say Buddha or Arhat; still others Vasudeva, the life-principle, the Moon, Fire, Karma, Nature, primordial nature and what not.

73. "Each sect give a different origin for the universe. Tell me which of them is true.

74. "I verily believe that there is nothing unknown to you because that famous and omniscient sage Vyaghrapada has been gracious to you, and profound wisdom shines in you though you are of the weaker sex. Please tell me out of your love to me, o fair one, speaking words of eternal life!"

75. Thus requested, Hemalekha spoke with pleasure: "Lord, I shall tell you the final Truth about God. Listen!

76-78. "God is the All-Seer who generates, permeates, sustains and destroys the universe. He is Siva, He is Vishnu, He is Brahman, the Sun, the Moon, etc. He is the One whom the different sects call their own; He is not Siva, nor Vishnu, nor Brahma nor any other exclusively.

79-93. "I will tell you father. Heed me! To say, for instance that the Primal Being is Siva with five faces and three eyes. The Creator would in that case be like an ordinary potter making pots, endowed with a body and brain. True, there is no art found in the world, without a body and some intellect. In fact, the creative faculty in men belongs to something between, the body and pure intelligence.

Note: - Body being insentient cannot act of its own accord; nor can intellect do so without a tool.

"Therefore the mind operates apart from the gross body, in dreams; being intelligent it creates environment suitable to its latent desires. This clearly indicates that the body is only a tool for a purpose and the agent is intelligence. Instruments are necessary for human agents because their capacities are limited and they are not self-contained. Whereas the Creator of the universe is perfect in Himself and creates the whole universe without any external aid. This leads to the important conclusion that God has no body. Otherwise, He would be reduced to a glorified human being, requiring innumerable accessories for work and influenced by seasons and environments, in no way different from a creature, and not the Lord. Moreover, pre-existence of accessories would quash

His unique mastery and imply limits to His powers of creation. This is absurd, as being contrary to the original premises. Therefore, He has no body nor the other aids, yet He still creates the world, O Lord of my life! Fools are taken in by the notion of giving a body to the transcendental Being. Still, if devotees worship and contemplate Him with a body according to their own inclinations, He shows them Grace, assuming such a body. For He is unique and fulfils the desires of His devotees.

"Nevertheless, the conclusion must be reached that He is pure intelligence and His consciousness is absolute and transcendental. Such is the consciousness-intelligence in purity, Absolute Being, the One Queen, Parameswari (Transcendental Goddess) overwhelming the three states and hence called Tripura. Though She is undivided whole the universe manifests in all its variety in Her, being reflected as it were, in a self-luminous mirror. The reflection cannot be apart from the mirror and is therefore one with it. Such being the case, there cannot be difference in degrees (e.g., Siva, or Vishnu being superior to each other). Bodies are mere conceptions in the lower order of beings and they are not to the point in the case of God. Therefore, be wise, and worship the one pure, unblemished Transcendence.

94. "If unable to comprehend this pure state, one should worship God in the concrete form which is most agreeable to him; in this way, too, one is sure to reach the goal, though gradually.

95. "Though one attempted it in millions of births, one would not advance except in one of these two ways."

Thus ends the Chapter on the Nature of God in the Section of Hemachuda in Tripura Rahasya.

CHAPTER VIII

KEY TO THE PARABLE OF CHAPTER V

1-3. Having learnt from the mouth of his wise wife, the true significance of Tripura, who is Pure Intelligence and God in Truth, and also the technique of Tripura's worship from competent teachers as prompted by divine grace, Hemachuda gained peace of mind and took to the worship with intense devotion.

A few months passed in this manner.

Note: - God's grace is the sine qua non of any kind of knowledge of God.

4. "The Supreme Mother's grace descended on him, and he became totally indifferent to pleasure because his mind was entirely absorbed in the practical investigation of the Truth.

5. "Such a state is impossible for any one without the Grace of God, because the mind engaged in practical search for truth is the surest means of emancipation.

6. "Parasurama! Countless aids will not give emancipation if an earnest search for truth is not made.

7. "Once more Hemachuda sought his wife alone, his mind absorbed in the quest for Truth.

8-9. "She saw her husband coming to her apartment, so she went to meet him, welcomed him and offered him her seat. She washed his feet and prostrated before him, as was due to one of his rank, and spoke melting words of sweet love.

10-14. "Dearest! I see you again after such a long time. Are you in good health? Of course, the body is sometimes liable to illness. Do tell me why you have been neglecting me all these days. Not a day passed before without your seeing me and conversing with me. How have you been passing your time? I could never have dreamt that you would be so indifferent to me! What makes you so? How do you spend your nights? You used to say that a moment without me was like eternity to you, and that you could not bear it." Saying this, she embraced him fondly and appeared distressed.

15-17. Though embraced lovingly by his dear wife, he was not moved in the least and said to her "Dear, I can no longer be deceived by you. I am convinced of your strength and that nothing can affect your inherent happiness. You are a sage and unperturbed. You know this world and beyond. How could anything affect you like this? I am here to ask your advice. Now please listen. Explain to me that tale you once related to me as the story of your life.

18. "Who is your mother? Who is your friend? Who is her husband? Who are her sons? Tell me, what relationship have all these people to me?

19. "I do not clearly understand it. I no longer think it is a lie. I am sure you told me a parable which is full of significance.

20. "Tell me everything in full so that I may understand it clearly. I bow to you reverently. Kindly clear these doubts."

21-23. Hemalekha with a smiling and delighted face heard her husband and thought within herself: 'He is now pure in mind and blessed of God. He is evidently indifferent to the pleasures of life and is also strong in mind. This must be due to God's Grace alone

and his former virtues are now bearing fruit. The time is now ripe for him to be enlightened, so I will enlighten him.' She said, "Lord, God's Grace is upon you, and you are blessed!

24-25. "Dispassion cannot arise otherwise. It is the criterion of God's Grace that the mind should be rapt in the quest for truth, after becoming detached from sensual pleasures. I shall now solve the puzzle of my life-story.

26. "My mother is Transcendence - pure Consciousness; my friend is intellect (discerning faculty); ignorance is Madam Dark, the undesirable friend of intellect.

27. "The caprices of ignorance are too well known to need elucidation, she can delude any one, making a rope seem to be a serpent and striking terror in the looker-on.

28-33. "Her son is the greatest of illusions - the mind; his wife is thought or conception or imagination; her sons are five in number, namely, audition, taste, sight, touch and smell, whose mansions are the respective senses. What the mind was said to steal from them is enjoyment of sensual objects which leaves an impress on the mind to develop later into the proclivities of the mind. Sharing stolen objects with his wife is manifestation of proclivities in dreams. Dream is the daughter-in-law of Delusion (i.e., ignorance). Madam Vorax is desire; her sons are anger and greed; their city is the body. What was said to be my most potent talisman is Realisation of the Self. Mind's friend guarding the city is the vital principle which keeps moving as the life-breath. The different cities peopled by them are hells passed in the eternal passage of the soul. The consummation of the discerning faculty is Samadhi. My admission into my mother's chamber is final emancipation."

34. "Such is in brief the tale of my life. Yours is likewise. Think well and be absolved."

Thus ends the Chapter on the Course of Life in the Section of Hemachuda in Tripura Rahasya.

CHAPTER IX

HOW THAT HEMACHUDA REALISED THE SELF

AFTER ANALYSING HIS OWN MIND AND PLUNGING WITHIN

1. When Hemachuda understood the significance of his wife's parable he was agreeably surprised. His voice chocked with pleasure as he said to her:

2. "My dear, you are indeed blessed, and clever too: how shall I describe the profound wisdom of the story of your life, narrated to me in the form of a parable.

3. "Up to now I did not know your progress. It has all been made as clear to me as a gooseberry resting on the palm of my hand.

4-5. "I now understand the end of humanity and realise wonderful nature. Please tell me further now: who is this mother of yours? How is she without beginning? Who are we? What is our real nature?"

Asked thus, Hemalekha told her husband:

6. "Lord, listen carefully to what I am going to say, for it is subtle. Investigate the nature of the Self with intellect made transparently clear.

7. "It is not an object to be perceived, nor described; how shall I then tell you of it? You know the mother only if you know the Self.

8. "The Self does not admit of specification, and therefore no teacher can teach it. However, realise the Self within you, for it abides in unblemished intellect.

9. "It pervades all, beginning from the personal God to the amoeba; but it is not cognisable by the mind or senses; being itself unillumined by external agencies, it illumines all, everywhere and always. It surpasses demonstration or discussion.

10. "How, where, when, or by whom has it been specifically described even incompletely? What you ask me, dear, amounts to asking me to show your eyes to you.

11-12. "Even the best teachers cannot bring your eyes to your sight. Just as a teacher is of no use in this instance, so in the other. He can at best guide you towards it and nothing more. I shall also explain to you the means to realisation. Listen attentively.

13. "As long as you contaminated with notions of me or mine (e.g., my home, my body, my mind, my intellect), the Self will not be found, for it lies beyond cognition and cannot be realised as 'my Self'.

14. "Retire into solitude, analyse and see what those things are which are cognised as mine; discard them all and transcending them, look for the Real Self.

15. "For instance, you know me as your wife and not as your self. I am only related to you and not part of you much less your very being.

16. "Analyse everything in this way and discard it. What remains over, transcending at all, beyond conception, appropriation, or relinquishment - know That to be the Self. That knowledge is final emancipation."

17. After receiving these instructions from his wife, Hemachuda rose hurriedly from his seat, mounted on his horse and galloped from the city.

18. He entered a royal pleasure-garden beyond the outskirts of the town and into a well-furnished crystal palace.

19-20. He dismissed his attendants and ordered the keepers: "Let no one enter these rooms while I am in contemplation - be they ministers, elders or even the king himself. They must wait until you obtain my permission."

21. Then he went up to a fine chamber in the ninth storey which looked out in all directions.

22. The room was well furnished and he sat down on a soft cushion. He collected his mind and began to contemplate thus:

23-30. "Truly all these people are deluded! No one of them knows even the fringe of the Self! But all are active for the sake of their own selves. Some of them recite the scriptures, a few study them and their commentaries; some are busy accumulating wealth; others are ruling the land; some are fighting the enemy; others are seeking the luxuries of life. When engaged in all this selfish activity they never question what exactly the Self may be; now why is there all this confusion? Oh! When the Self is not known, all is in vain and as if done in a dream. So I will now investigate the matter.

"My home, wealth, kingdom, treasure, women, cattle - none of these is me, and they are only mine. I certainly take the body for the Self but it is simply a tool of mine. I am indeed the king's son, with goodly limbs and a fair complexion. These people, too, are taken up by this same notion that their bodies are their egos."

31-36. Reflecting thus, he considered the body. He could not identify the body as the Self, and so began to transcend it. This body is mine, not me. It is built up of blood and bones, and is changing each moment. How can this be the changeless, continuous me. It looks like a chattel; it is apart from me as is a waking body from the dream, etc. 'I' cannot be the body nor can the vital force be the Self; mind and intellect are clearly my tools so they cannot be 'I'. 'I' am surely something apart from all these, beginning from the body and ending with the intellect. [Note. - The intermediates are (1) the senses, (2) the mind including the thinking, reasoning and coordinating faculties, (3) vital force.] I am always aware, but do not realise that pure state of awareness. The reason of this inability is not clear to me.

37-38. Objects are cognised through the senses, not otherwise; life is recognised by touch, and mind by intellect. By whom is the intellect made evident? I do not know.... I

now see I am always aware - realisation of that pure awareness is obstructed by other factors (pertaining to the non-self) butting in - Now I shall not imagine them - They cannot appear without my mental imagery of them and they cannot obstruct the glory of the Self, without appearing.

39. Thinking thus, he forcibly arrested his thoughts.

40-41. Instantaneously blank superseded. He, at the same time, decided that it was the Self, so became very happy and once again he began to meditate. "I will do it again," he said and plunged within.

42. The restlessness of the mind being thus resolutely checked, he saw in an instant a blazing light with no circumference.

43-45. Regaining human consciousness, he began to wonder how this could happen. 'There is no constancy in the experience. The Self cannot be more than one. I will repeat and see,' he said and dived again. This time he fell into a long sleep and dreamt wonderful dreams. On waking up, he fell furiously to think:

46-48. "How is it that I was overpowered by sleep and started to dream? The darkness and light which I saw before must also be in the nature of dreams. Dreams are mental imagery, and how shall I overcome them? "I shall again repress my thoughts and see," he said, and plunged within.

His mind was placid for a time. He thought himself sunk in bliss.

49-54. Shortly after, he regained his original state, owing to the mind again beginning to function. He reflected: "What is all this? Is it a dream or a hallucination of the mind? My experience is a fact but it surpasses my imagination.

"Why is that bliss quite unique and unlike any that I have experienced before? The highest of my known experiences cannot compare with even an infinitesimal part of the state of bliss I was in just now. It was like sleep in so far as I was not externally aware. But there was a peculiar bliss at the same time. The reason is not clear to me because there was nothing to impart pleasure to me. Although I attempted to realise the Self, I do not do so. I probably realise the Self and also see others like darkness, light, dreams or pleasure, etc. Or is it possible that these are the stages of development for the realisation of the Self? I do not understand it. Let me ask my recondite wife."

55-61. Having thus resolved, the prince ordered the door-keeper to ask Hemalekha to come to him. Within an hour and a half, she was climbing the steps of the mansion like the Queen of Night moving, across the sky. She discovered the prince, her consort, in perfect peace of mind, calm, collected and of happy countenance. She quickly went to his side and sat by him. As she nestled close to him he opened his eyes and found her sitting close to him. Directly he did so, she quickly and fondly embraced him and gently spoke sweet words of love: "Lord, what can I do for Your Highness? I hope you are well. Please

tell me why you called me up to this place?" Thus addressed, he spoke to his wife in his turn:

62-66. "My dear! I have, as advised by you, retired to a solitary place where I am engaged in investigating the Self. Even so, I have diverse visions and experiences. Thinking that the constant Self-awareness is dimmed by the uncalled-for interference of mental activities, I forcibly repressed my thoughts, and remained calm. Darkness superseded, light appeared, sleep supervened and finally a unique bliss overpowered me for a little while. Is this the Self, or something different? Please analyse these experiences of mine and tell me, my dear, so that I may clearly understand them.

67-69. "After listening to him carefully Hemalekha, the knower of this world and beyond, spoke sweetly thus.

'Listen to me, my dear, closely. What you have now done to repress thoughts with the mind turned inward is good beginning and praised by the worthy as the best way. Without it, no one has ever been successful anywhere. However, it does not produce Self-realisation for the Self remains realised at all times.

70. "If a product, it cannot be the Self. For, how can the Self be got anew? So then, the Self is never gained. Gain is of something which is not already possessed. Is there any moment when the Self is not the Self? Neither is control of mind used to gain it. I shall give you some examples:

72. "Just as things unseen in darkness are found on its removal by means of a lamp, and are therefore said to be recovered from oblivion.

73-74. "Just as a confused man forgets his purse, but remembers and locates it on keeping his mind unruffled and steady, yet still says that he has gained the lost purse, though the steadying of his mind did not produce it.

75. "So also the control of your mind is not the cause of your Self-realisation; though the Self is always there, it is not recognised by you even with a controlled mind because you are not conversant with it.

76. "Just as a yokel unacquainted with the system cannot understand the dazzling lights of the royal audience-chamber at night and so ignores its magnificence at first sight, so it is that you miss the Self.

77. "Attend dear! Blank darkness was visible after you controlled your thoughts. In the short interval before its appearance and after the control of mind there remains a state free from the effort to control and the perception of darkness.

78. "Always remember that state as the one of perfect and transcendental happiness. All are deceived in that state because their minds are accustomed to be turned outward.

79. "Though people may be learned, skilful and keen, still they search and search, only to be thwarted and they do not abide in that holy state.

80. "They grieve day and night, without knowing this state. Mere theoretical knowledge of sculpture can never make a man a sculptor.

81. "Though he be a pandit well grounded in the theory and the discussion of the philosophy of the Self, he cannot realise the Self because it is not realisable but already realised. Realisation is not attained by going far, but only by staying still not by thought (intellection) but by cessation of thought.

83-85. "Effort towards Realisation is like the attempt to stamp with one's foot on the shadow cast by one's head. Effort will always make it recede.

"Just as an infant tries to take hold of his own reflection being unaware of the mirror, so also common people are taken in by their mental reflections on the mirror of the pure, luminous Self and are not aware of the mirror, because they have no acquaintance with the Self.

"Although people understand space, they are not aware of it because they are taken up by the objects in space.

86-88. "They understand the universe in space but have no regard for space itself. Similarly, it is with them in regard to the Self.

"My Lord, consider well. The world consists of knowledge and the objects known. Of these the objects are non-self and perceived by senses; knowledge is self-evident; there is no world in the absence of knowledge. Knowledge is the direct proof of the existence of objects which are therefore dependent on knowledge. Knowledge is dependent on the knower for its existence. The knower does not require any tests for knowing his own existence. The knower therefore is the only reality behind knowledge and objects. That which is self-evident without the necessity to be proved, is alone real; not so other things.

89-91. "He who denies knowledge has no ground to stand on and so no discussion is possible.

"The subject of knowledge settled, the question arises regarding the existence of objects in the absence of their knowledge. Objects and their knowledge are only reflections in the eternal, self-luminous, supreme Consciousness which is the same as the knower and which alone is real. The doubt that the reflection should be of all objects simultaneously without reference to time and place (contrary to our experience), need not arise because time and space are themselves knowable concepts and are equally reflections. The specific nature of the reflections is the obverse of the objects found in space.

92. "Therefore, Prince, realise with a still mind your own true nature which is the one pure, undivided Consciousness underlying the restless mind which is composed of the whole universe in all its diversity.

93. "If one is fixed in that fundamental basis of the universe (ie., the Self), one becomes the All-doer. I shall tell you how to inhere thus. I assure you - you will be That.

94. "Realise with a still mind the state between sleep and wakefulness, the interval between the recognition of one object after another or gap between two perceptions.

Note. - The commentator compares the rays of light proceeding from the Sun before they impinge on materials. They are themselves invisible, but capable of illumining objects. This explains the third statement above. He also says that consciousness is like water flowing through a channel and later assuming the shape of the beds watered.

95. "This is the real Self, inhering in which one is no longer deluded. Unaware of this Truth, people have become inheritors of sorrow.

Note. - The commentator adds that a sage realising the world as the reflection of the mind treats it as such and is thus free from misery.

96-97. "Shape, taste, smell, touch, sound, sorrow, pleasure, the act of gaining, or the object gained - none of these finds place in that Transcendence which is the support of all there is, and which is the being in all but not exclusively so. That is the Supreme Lord, the Creator, the Supporter and the Destroyer of the universe and the Eternal Being.

98. "Now let not your mind be outgoing; turn it inward; control it just a little and watch for the Self, always remembering that the investigator is himself the essence of being and the Self of Self.

Note. - The commentary on this sloka says: This sloka contains what is not to be done (namely, the mind should not be permitted to be outgoing), what is to be done (the mind is to be turned inwards) and what is to be engaged in (watchfulness). Just a short control is enough; no long control is necessary for the purpose. The question arises: how to look? The investigator, investigation and the object investigated are all one. The mind should be brought to the condition of a new-born baby. Then he feels as if he were separate from all gross materials and only the feeling 'I am' persists.

When the mind is controlled a little, a state will be evident at the end of the effort in which the Self can be realised as pure being, underlying all phenomena but undivided by them, similar to the baby sense.

99. "Be also free from the thought 'I see'; remain still like a blind man seeing. What transcends sight and no sight that you are. Be quick."

Note. - Here the commentary says: The Self transcends also the feeling 'I see'. Adherence to that sensation divorces one from the Self. Therefore, let that feeling also vanish, for that state is absolutely unstained by will, sensation or thought. Otherwise, there will be no perfection in spite of innumerable efforts.

Again the word 'sight' includes the awake and dream states and 'no sight' signifies deep sleep. That which is threading through these three states and even surpassess the sense 'I am' is what you are. This is the fourth state Turiya (which is the string on which all the diverse objects of the universe are strung and the whole is a garland to Sri Ramana! Tr.)

100. Hemachuda did accordingly, and having gained that state referred to by his wife, he remained peaceful a long time, unaware of anything beside the Self.

Note. - The commentator says that he was in Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

Thus ends the Chapter on Peace in the Section on Hemachuda in Tripura Rahasya.

CHAPTER X

ON FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS BY HIS BELOVED,

HE GOT SAMADHI IN SPITE OF HIS EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

AND REMAINED IN THE STATE OF EMANCIPATION EVEN WHILE ALIVE

1-5. "Hemalekha noticed that her husband had attained supreme Peace and so did not disturb him. He awoke in an hour and a half, opened his eyes and saw his wife nearby. Eager to fall into that state once more, he closed his eyes; and immediately Hemalekha took hold of his hands and asked him sweetly: 'My Lord, tell me what you have ascertained to be your gain on closing your eyes, or your loss on opening them, my dearest. I love to hear you. Do say what happens on the eyes being closed or left open.'

6. "On being pressed for an answer, he looked as if he were drunk and replied reluctantly and languidly, as follows:

7-14. "'My dear, I have found pure untainted happiness. I cannot find the least satisfaction in the activities of the world as sorrow increases when they finish. Enough of them! They are tasteless to me like a sucked orange, only indulged in by wasters, or like cattle

incessantly chewing the cud. What a pity that such people should be to this day unaware of the bliss of their own Self! Just as a man goes a-begging in ignorance of the treasure hidden under his floor, so did I run after sensual pleasures unaware of the boundless ocean of bliss within me. Worldly pursuits are laden with misery and pleasures are transient. Still I was so infatuated that I mistook them for enduring pleasures, was often grief-stricken, yet did not cease to pursue them over and over again. The pity of it: Men are fools, unable to discriminate pleasure from pain. They seek pleasures but gain sorrow. Enough of these activities which increase the relish for such pleasure.

"My dear, I beg you with hands clasped. Let me fall again into the peace of my blissful self. I pity you that though knowing this state, you are not in it but are ever engaged in vain."

15-27. "The wise girl gently smiled at all this, and said to him: 'My lord, you do not yet know the highest state of sanctity (which is not besmirched by duality), reaching which the wise transcend duality and are never perplexed. That state is as far from you as the sky is from the earth. Your small measure of wisdom is as good as no wisdom, because it is not unconditional, but remains conditioned by closing or opening your eyes. Perfection cannot depend on activity or the reverse, on effort or no effort. How can that state be a perfect one if mental or physical activity can influence it or if the displacement of the eyelid by the width of a barley grain makes all the difference to it? Again, how can it be perfect if located only in the interior? What shall I say of your muddled wisdom! How ridiculous to think that your eyelid one inch long, can shut up the expanse in which millions of worlds revolve in one corner alone!'

"Listen Prince! I will tell you further. As long as these knots are not cut asunder so long will bliss not be found (The knowledge acquired is thus not effective). These knots are millions in number and are created by the bond of delusion which is no other than ignorance of Self. These knots give rise to mistaken ideas, the chief of which is the identification of the body with the Self, which in its turn gives rise to the perennial stream of happiness and misery in the shape of the cycle of births and deaths. The second knot is the differentiation of the world from the Self whose being consciousness is the mirror on which the phenomena are simply reflected. Similarly with the other knots including the differentiation of beings among themselves and from the universal Self. They have originated from time immemorial and recur with unbroken ignorance. The man is not finally redeemed until he has extricated himself from these numberless knots of ignorance.

28-38. "The state which is the result of your closing the eyes, cannot be enough, for it is pure intelligence and eternal truth transcending anything else yet serving as the magnificent mirror to reflect the phenomena arising in itself. Prove, if you can, that everything is not contained in it. Whatever you admit as known to you, is in the knowledge conveyed by that consciousness. Even what may be surmised to be in another place and at a different time, is also within your consciousness. Moreover, what is not apparent and unknown to that intelligence is a figment of imagination like the son of a

barren woman. There cannot be anything that is not held by consciousness, just as there cannot be reflection without a reflecting surface.

"Therefore I tell you that your conviction: 'I shall lose it by opening my eyes' or 'I know it,' is the knot awaiting to be cut, and there will be no attainment though, remember, it cannot be the perfect state if it can be attained. What you consider the happy state as accomplished by the movements of your eyelids, cannot indeed be perfect because it is certainly intermittent and not unconditional. Is any place found where the effulgence is not, my lord, of the fire blazing at the dissolution of the universe? All will resolve into that fire and no residue will be left. Similarly also the fire of realisation will burn away all your sense of duty so that there will be nothing left for you to do. Be strong, root out your thoughts and cut off the deep-rooted knots from your heart, namely, 'I will see', 'I am not this', 'This is non-Self', and such like.

"Find wherever you turn the one undivided, eternal blissful Self; also watch the whole universe reflected as it arises and subsides in the Self. See the Self both within and without you; yet do not confound the seeing Self within as the Seer of the universal Self without, for both are the same. Inhere in the peace of your true internal Self, devoid of all phenomena."

39-42. At the end of her speech, Hemachuda's confusion was cleared up, so that he gradually became well established in the perfect Self bereft of any distinction of within and without. Being always equable, he led a very happy life with Hemalekha and others, reigned over his kingdom and made it prosperous, engaged his enemies in war and conquered them, studied the scriptures and taught them to others, filled his treasury, performed the sacrifices pertaining to royalty and lived twenty-thousand years, emancipated while yet alive (Jivanmukta).

Note. - Scholars say that "One thousand" is a peculiar expression for 'four.' Thus twenty-thousand stands for eighty.

43-61. "The king Muktachuda having heard that his son Hemachuda had become a Jivanmukta, consulted his other son Manichuda. Both agreed that Hemachuda was not as before, but that he had changed so that he was no longer affected by the greatest of pleasures or the worst of sorrows that he treated friend and foe alike; that he was indifferent to loss or gain; that he engaged in royal duties like an actor in a play; that he seemed like a man always intoxicated with wine; and that he did his duty well notwithstanding his absent-minded or other worldly look. They pondered the matter over and wondered. Then sought him in private and asked him the reason of his change. When they had heard him speak of his state, they too desired to be instructed by him, and finally became Jivanmuktas like Hemachuda. The ministers were in their turn desirous of attaining that state, and eventually reached it after receiving proper instructions from the king. So were the citizens, the artisans and all classes of people in that city. All of them gained the summum bonum (highest good) of life and transcended desire, anger, lust, etc. Even the children and the very old people were no longer moved by passions. There were still worldly transactions in this ideal state, because the people consciously acted their

parts as the actors in a drama, in accord with the rest of creation. A mother would rock the cradle with lullabies expressive of the highest Truth; a master and his servants dealt with one another in the Light of that Truth; players entertained the audience with plays depicting Truth; singers sang only songs on Truth; the court fools caricatured ignorance as ludicrous; the academy only taught lessons on God-knowledge. The whole State was thus composed only of sages and philosophers, be they men or women; servant-boys or servant-maids; dramatic actors or fashionable folk; artisans or labourers; ministers or harlots. They nevertheless acted in their professions in harmony with creation. They never cared to recapitulate the past or speculate on the future with a view to gain pleasure or avoid pain, but acted for the time being, laughing rejoicing, crying or shouting like drunkards, thus dissipating all their latent tendencies.

62. "The rishis, Sanaka and others called it the City of Wisdom when they visited it.

63-68. "Even parrots and cockatoos in their cages spoke word of wisdom, e.g., 'Consider the Self as pure intelligence bereft of objective knowledge.'

"What is known is not different from that intelligence, it is like a series of images reflected in a mirror. Absolute consciousness is the universe; it is 'I', it is all, sentient and insentient, mobile and immobile. Everything else is illuminated by it whereas it is alone and Self-luminous. Therefore let those sensible people who are desirous of chit (pure intelligence) turn away from illusory knowledge and contemplate their own Self - the absolute consciousness - which illumines all the rest, and which is their being too. The town where even the lower animals convey such supreme wisdom is famous to this day as the City of Wisdom on Earth, which reputation it owes to that one wise princess Hemalekha by whose advice Hemachuda became a Jivanmukta, all the rest following in his wake."

69. Dattatreya continued: "Thus, you see, Parasurama, the primary cause of emancipation is association with the wise. Therefore, follow that advice first and foremost."

Thus ends Chapter X on the Section of Hemachuda in Tripura Rahasya.

CHAPTER XI

THAT THE COSMOS IS NOT OTHER THAN INTELLIGENCE

1. After he had listened to this sublime story of Hemachuda, Bhargava was confused and asked:

2-5. "Lord, my Master! What you have related as a wonderful teaching appears to me against the experience of all people in every way. How can the magnificent, objective universe be no other than tenuous consciousness, which is not seen, but only inferred? Pure intelligence devoid of known objects cannot be imagined and therefore cannot be postulated. Thus the whole theme based on it is not at all clear to me. I pray you kindly to elucidate the subject so that I may understand it." Thus requested, Dattatreya continued:

6-30. "I will now tell you the truth of the objective world, as it is. What is seen is absolutely nothing but sight. I shall now give you the proof of this statement. Listen with attention. All that is seen has an origin and there must therefore be an antecedent cause for it. What is origin except that the thing newly appears? The world is changing every moment and its appearance is new every moment and so it is born every moment. Some say that the birth of the universe is infinite and eternal each moment. Some may contest the point saying that the statement is true of a specific object or objects but not of the world which is the aggregate of all that is seen. The scholiasts of Vijnana answer them thus: The external phenomena are only momentary projections of the anamnesis of the continuous link, namely, the subject and the worldly actions are based on them. But the intellect which collates time, space and phenomena is infinite and eternal at each moment of their appearance and it is called Vijnana by them. Others say that the universe is the aggregate of matter - mobile and immobile. (The atomists maintain that the universe is made up of five elements, earth, air, fire, water and ether which are permanent and of things like a pot, a cloth, etc., which are transient. They are still unable to prove the external existence of the world, because they admit that happenings in life imply their conceptual nature. It follows that the objects not so involved are useless.)

"But all are agreed that the universe has an origin. (What is then the point in saying that the momentary creations are eternal and infinite? The momentary nature cannot be modified by the qualifications mentioned. There is no use in dressing a condemned man before the executioner's axe is laid on him.) To say however that creation is due to nature (accidental?) is to overstretch the imagination and therefore unwarranted. The Charvakas, nihilists, argue that some effects are not traceable to their efficient causes. There are occurrences without any antecedent causes. Just as a cause need not always foretell an event, so also the event need not always have a cause. The conclusion follows that the world is an accident.

"If a thing can appear without a cause there is no relation between cause and effect, and there can be no harmony in the world. A potter's work may lead to a weaver's products, and vice versa, which is absurd. The interdependence of cause and effect is ascertained by their logical sequence and proved by its role in practical life. How then can an universe be accident?

"They infer the cause where it is not obvious, and trace the cause from the effect. This conforms to the universal practice. Each occurrence must have a cause for it; that is the rule. Even if the cause is not obvious, it must be inferred; otherwise the world activities would be in vain - which is absurd. The conclusion is then reached that every event is a product of a certain condition or conditions; and this fact enables people to engage in

purposeful work. So it is in the practical world. Therefore the theory of accidental creation is not admissible.

"The atomists premise a material cause for creation and name it imponderable atoms. According to them, the imponderable atoms produce the tangible world, which did not exist before creation and will not remain after dissolution. (The existence of the world before or after is only imaginary and untrue, like a human horn - they say.) How can the same thing be true at one time and untrue at another? Again if the primary atoms are imponderable, without magnitude and yet are permanent, how can they give rise to material and transient products endowed with magnitude?"

"How can the same thing be yellow and not yellow - bright and dark - at the same time? These qualities are not in harmony; the whole theory is confused, it is as if one were trying to mix up the immiscibles. Again, how did the primordial atoms begin to unite to produce diatoms or triatoms? Was it of their own accord? (which is impossible because, they are insentient) or by God's will? (Then the action is God's and not of the atoms. Otherwise it would be like a king in his palace who, by merely willing to kill the enemy, sent his weapons flying about in the act of destruction). (It has already been pointed out that God cannot be supposed to operate atoms for the purpose of creation, as a potter does with clay.)

Note. - Thus the idea of the beginning of creation is altogether refuted.

"It is also absurd to say that the insentient atoms of matter began creation when the equilibrium of the three forces Satva, Rajas and Tamas, was disturbed. (One of the systems of philosophy believes that three qualities, brightness, activity and darkness, are always there in equilibrium. When disturbed, creation begins; when they revert to equilibrium, the universe is dissolved.) How are the changes in the state of equilibrium brought about? Change is not possible without an intelligent cause. So none of the systems can satisfactorily account for creation. Scriptures alone are the guide for comprehending the metaphysical and the transcendental. The rest are not authoritative because of the individual's limitations, the absence of reliable tests for their accuracy, and of the repeated failures of attempts which ignore God. The universe must have a Creator, and He must be an intelligent principle, but He cannot be of any known type because of the vastness of the creation. His power is past understanding and is dealt with in the Scriptures, whose authority is incontrovertible. They speak of the unique Creator, the Lord who was before creation, being self-contained. He created the universe by His own power. It is in its entirety and all its details, a picture on the screen of His Self like the dream world on the individual consciousness. The individual encompasses his own creation with his ego (as 'I'); so does the Lord play with the universe. Just as the dreamer is not to be confounded with the dream so is the Lord not to be confounded with the creation. Just as a man survives his dream, so does the Lord survive the dissolution of His creation. Just as you remain ever as pure consciousness apart from the body, etc., so is the Lord, unbounded consciousness apart from the universe, etc. Is it not after all only a picture drawn by Him on His Self? How can this unique creation be apart from Him? There can indeed be nothing but consciousness. Tell me of any place where there is no

consciousness; there is no place beyond consciousness. Or can any one prove in any manner anything outside consciousness? Consciousness is inescapable.

31-32. "Moreover, this consciousness is the only existence, covering the whole universe, and perfect all through. Just as there cannot be breakers apart from the ocean and light without the Sun, so also the Universe cannot be conceived without consciousness. The Supreme God is thus the embodiment of pure Consciousness.

33-34. "This whole universe consisting of the mobile and the immobile, arises from, abides in, and resolves into Him. This is the final and well-known conclusion of the Scriptures; and the Scriptures never err. The guide by which one can apprehend the metaphysical and transcendental matters is Scripture alone.

35. "Miraculous powers possessed by gems and incantations cannot be denied, nor can they be fathomed by a man of limited knowledge.

36-40. "Because the scriptures proceed from the all-knowing Lord, they partake of His omniscient quality. The Being mentioned in them is eternally existing even before the birth of the universe. His creation has been without any material aids. Therefore God is supreme, perfect, pure and self-contained. The creation is not an object apart; it is a picture drawn on the canvas of supreme consciousness, for there cannot possibly be anything beyond Perfection. Imagination on the contrary, is impractical. The universe has thus originated only as an image on the surface of the mirror of the Absolute. This conclusion is in harmony with all facts.

41-45. "Creation is like a magician's trick, and is a city born of divine imagination. O Parasurama, you are aware of the mental creations of day-dreamers which are full of people, life and work, similar to this. There are also doubts, tests, discussions and conclusions - all imaginary arising in the mind and subsiding there. Just as castles in the air are mental figments of men so also is this creation a mental figment of Siva. Siva is absolute Awareness, without any form. Sri Tripura is Sakti (energy) and Witness of the whole. That Being is perfect all round and remains undivided.

46-47. "Time and space are the factors of division in the world; of these, space refers to the location of objects and time to the sequence of events. Time and space are themselves projected from consciousness, how then would they divide or destroy their own basis and still continue to be what they are?

48-51. "Can you show the time or place not permeated by consciousness? Is it not within your consciousness when you speak of it? The fact of the existence of things is only illumination of them, and nothing more. Such illumination pertains to consciousness alone. That alone counts which is self-shining. Objects are not so, for their existence depends upon perception of them by conscious beings. But consciousness is self-effulgent - not so the objects, which depend on conscious beings for being known.

52-54. "If on the other hand, you contend that objects exist even if not perceived by us, I tell you - listen! There is no consistency in the world regarding the existence or non-existence of things. Their cognition is the only factor determining it. Just as reflections have no substance in them, outside of the mirror, so also the things of the world have no substance in them outside of the cognising factor, viz., Intelligence.

The detail and tangibility of things are no arguments against their being nothing but images.

55-63. "Those qualities of reflected images depend on the excellence of the reflecting surface, we can see in the case of water and polished surface. Mirrors are insentient and are not self-contained. Whereas, consciousness is always pure and self-contained; it does not require an external object to create the image. Ordinary mirrors are liable to be soiled by extraneous dirt whereas consciousness has nothing foreign to it, being always alone and undivided; and therefore its reflections are unique. Created things are not self-luminous and are illumined by another's cognitive faculty. Cognition of things implies their images on our intelligence. They are only images. The creation therefore is an image. It is not self-shining; and thus it is not self-aware, but becomes a fact on our perception of it. Therefore I say that the universe is nothing but an image on our consciousness. Consciousness shines notwithstanding the formation of images on it; though impalpable, it is steadily fixed and does not falter. Just as the images in a mirror are not apart from the mirror, so also the creations of consciousness are not apart from it.

64. "Objects are necessary for producing images in a mirror; they are not however necessary for consciousness because it is self-contained.

65-66 .... "O Parasurama! note how day-dreams and hallucinations are clearly pictured in the mind even in the absence of any reality behind them. How does it happen? The place of objects is taken up by the peculiar imaginative quality of the mind. When such imagination is deep, it takes shape as creation; consciousness is pure and unblemished in the absence of imagination.

67. "Thus you see how consciousness was absolute and pure before creation and how its peculiar quality or will brought about this image of the world in it.

68-69. "So the world is nothing but an image drawn on the screen of consciousness; it differs from a mental picture in its long duration; that is again due to the strength of will producing the phenomenon. The universe appears practical, material and perfect because the will determining its creation is perfect and independent; whereas the human conceptions are more or less transitory according to the strength or the weakness of the will behind them.

70. "The hampering of limitations is to some extent overcome by the use of incantations, gems and herbs, and an unbroken current of 'I' is established.

71. "With the aid of that pure yoga, O Rama observe the creation manifested by one's will like the hallucinations brought about by a magician.

Note. - There are said to be some live gems which have extraordinary properties. They are lustrous even in the dark and do not take on different lustres according to the background. They also illumine the objects close to them. One kind is said to be cool to touch and it does not become warm even on contact with the body; another is said to sweat in moonlight; still another makes the owner prosperous; yet another ruins him (e.g., the 'Hope' diamond), and so on.

A vivid account is given of a magician's performance in Ranjit Singh's court. He threw a rope into the air which stood taut. A man climbed up the rope and disappeared.

72. Objects in the world can be handled and put to use, while mental creations (e.g., dreams) present the same phenomenon.

73. "A magician's creations are only transitory; a yogi's creations may be permanent; both are external to the creator, whereas the divine creation cannot be apart from the omnipresent Lord.

Note. - Visvamitra, a great Rishi, is reputed to have created a duplicate Universe, a part of which consists of the constellations composing Scorpio, Sagittarius, and the Southern Cross. Some trees, plants and herbs in imitation of well-known species (e.g., palmyra corresponding to cocoanut, jungle potatoes and onions insipid to taste and useless, etc.) are among his creations.

74. "Because the Lord of consciousness is infinite, the creation can remain only within Him and the contrary is pure fancy.

75. "Since the Universe is only a projection from and in the mirror of consciousness, its unreal nature can become clear only on investigation, and not otherwise.

76. "Truth can never change its nature, whereas untruth is always changing. See how changeful the nature of the world is!

77-78. "Distinguish between the changeless truth and the changeful untruth and scrutinise the world comprised of these two factors, changeful phenomena and changeless subjective consciousness, like the unchanging light of the mirror and the changing images in it.

79. "The world cannot stand investigation because of its changing unreal nature. Just as the owl is dazzled and blinded by bright sunlight, so the world parades in glory before ignorance and disappears before right analysis.

Note. - The man sees by sunlight and is helpless in its absence. The owl sees in darkness and is blinded in sunlight. Whose sight is the better of the two? This cannot be determined satisfactorily so that investigation becomes lame.

80-84. "What is food for one, is poison for another (e.s., decomposed food for worms and men). What is one thing to yogis and celestials, is another to others. A long distance by one vehicle is short by another.

"Long intervals of space reflected in the mirror are themselves in it and yet unreal.

"In this way, investigation becomes indeterminate by itself. Investigation and the object investigated are both indeterminate, and the only constant factor underlying both is consciousness. Nothing else can stand beside it.

85. "That which shines as 'Is' is Her Majesty the Absolute Consciousness.

"Thus the universe is only the Self - the One and one only."

Thus ends the Chapter XI on the Ascertainment of Truth in Tripura Rahasya.

CHAPTER XII

THE APPEARANCE OF THE REALITY OF THE UNIVERSE

DEPENDS ON THE STRENGTH OF WILL OF CREATION

1. Even after listening to Dattatreya patiently, Parasurama was still perplexed and asked:

2. "O Lord, what you have said so far about the Universe is the truth.

3. "Even so, how is it that it appears to be real to me and to others who are both intelligent and shrewd?

4. "Why does it continue to seem to be real to me even though I have heard you say otherwise? Please prove to me its unreality and remove my present illusion."

5. Thus requested, Dattatreya, the great sage, began to explain the cause of the illusion which makes one believe the world to be real.

6. "Listen, Rama! This illusion is very old, being no other than the deep-rooted ignorance which mistakes one thing for another.

7. "See how the true Self has been ignored and the body has become identified with the Self. Consider this foul body comprised of blood and bones beside that unblemished, pure intelligence!

8. "Even the gross body becomes mistaken for crystal-clear consciousness by mere force of habit.

9. "So also the universe has repeatedly been taken to be real so that it now looks as if it were actually real. The remedy lies in a change of outlook.

10. "The world becomes for one whatever one is accustomed to think it. This is borne out by the realisation of yogis of the objects of their long contemplation.

11-12. "I shall illustrate this point by an ancient and wonderful incident. There is a very holy town, Sundara, in the country of Vanga. Here once lived a very wise and famous king, Susena by name. His younger brother, Mahasena, was his loyal and dutiful subject.

13. " The king ruled his kingdom so well that all his subjects loved him. On one occasion he performed the horse-sacrifice.

Note. - This sacrifice can be performed only by the most powerful kings. A horse chosen and dedicated for sacrifice is allowed to roam wherever it pleases. The sacrificer or his lieutenant or group of lieutenants, follows the horse at a distance. The horse is a challenge to the kings in whose country it roams, so that battles are fought until the horse is successfully brought back and the sacrifice performed.

14. "All the most valiant princes followed the horse with a great army.

15. "Their course was victorious until they reached the banks of the Irrawaddy.

16. "They were so elated that they passed by the peacefully sitting royal sage, Gana, without saluting him.

17. "Gana's son noticed the insult to his father and was exasperated. He caught the sacrificial horse and fought the heroes guarding it.

18-23. "They surrounded him on all sides but he together with the horse entered a hill, Ganda, before their eyes. Noticing his disappearance in the hill, the invaders attacked the hill. The sage's son re-appeared with a huge army, fought the enemy, defeated them and destroyed Susena's army. He took many prisoners of war, including all the princes and then re-entered the hill. A few followers who escaped fled to Susena and told him everything. Susena was surprised and said to his brother

24-30. "Brother! go to the place of the sage, Gana. Remember that penance doers are wonderfully powerful and cannot be conquered even by gods. Therefore take care to please him so that you may be allowed to bring back the princes and the horse in time for the sacrifice which is fast approaching. Pride before sages will always be humbled. If enraged, they reduce the world to ashes. Approach him with respect so that our object may be fulfilled.

"Mahasena obeyed and immediately started on his errand. He arrived at Gana's hermitage and found the sage seated peacefully like a rock, with his senses, mind and intellect under perfect control. The sage, who was immersed in the Self, looked like a calm sea whose waves of thought had quieted down. Mahasena spontaneously fell prostrate before the sage and began to sing his praises, and here he remained for three days in reverential attitude.

31-46. "The sage's son who had been watching the new visitor was pleased, and coming to him said, - I am pleased with the respect you show for my father, tell me what I can do for you and I will do it at once. I am the son of this great Gana, the unique hermit. Prince, listen to me. This is not the time for my father to speak. He is now in Kevala Nirvikalpa Samadhi and will come out of it only after twelve years, of which five have already passed and seven yet remain.

"Tell me now what you desire from him and I will do it for you. Do not underestimate me and think that I am only a headstrong youth not worthy of my father. There is nothing impossible for yogis engaged in penance."

"After hearing him, Mahasena, being wise, saluted him with clasped hands and said: 'Oh child of the sage! If you mean to fulfil my desire I want to make a short request to your wise father when he has come out of his samadhi. Kindly help me to that end if you please.' After he had thus requested, the sage's son replied: 'King, your request is hard to grant. Having promised fulfilment of your desire, I cannot now go back on my word. I must now ask you to wait an hour and a half and watch my yogic power. This, my father, is now in transcendental peace. Who can wake him up by external efforts? Wait! I shall do it forthwith by means of subtle yoga.'

"Saying so, he sat down, withdrew his senses, united the in-going and out-going breaths, exhaled air and stopped motionless for a short time; in this way he entered the mind of the sage and after agitating it, re-entered his own body. Immediately the sage came to his senses and found Mahasena in front of him, prostrating and praising him. He thought for a moment taking in the whole situation by his extraordinary powers.

47-49. "Perfectly peaceful and cheerful in mind, he beckoned to his son and said to him: 'Boy, do not repeat this fault. Wrath wrecks penance. Penance is only possible and can progress without obstruction because the king protects yogis. To interfere with a sacrifice is always reprehensible and never to be countenanced by the good. Be a good boy and return the horse and the princes immediately. Do it at once so that the sacrifice may be performed at the appointed hour.'

50. "Directed thus, the sage's son was immediately appeased. He went into the hill, returned with the horse and the princes and released them with pleasure.

51-53. "Mahasena sent the princes with the horse to the town. He was surprised at what he saw and saluting the sage asked him respectfully: "Lord, please tell me how the horse and the princes were concealed in the hill." Then the sage replied:

54-66. "Listen, O King, I was formerly an emperor ruling the empire bounded by the seas. After a long while the Grace of God descended on me and I grew disgusted with the world as being but trash in the light of consciousness within. I abdicated the kingdom in favour of my sons and retired into this forest. My wife, being dutiful, accompanied me here. Several years were passed in our penance and austerities. Once my wife embraced me and this son was born to her when I was in samadhi. She brought me to my senses, left the babe with me and died. This boy was brought up by me with love and care. When he grew up, he heard that I had once been a king; he wished to be one also and besought me to grant his prayer. I initiated him in yoga which he practised with such success that he was able by the force of his will to create a world of his own in this hill which he is now ruling. The horse and princes were kept there. I have now told you the secret of that hill." After hearing it Mahasena asked again:

67. "I have with great interest heard your wonderful account of this hill. I want to see it. Can you grant my prayer?"

68. "Being so requested, the sage commanded his son saying: 'Boy! show him round the place and satisfy him.'

69. "Having said thus, the sage again lapsed into samadhi; and his son went away with the king.

70. "The sage's son entered the hill without trouble and disappeared, but Mahasena was not able to enter. So he called out for the sage's son.

71. "He too called out to the king, from the interior of the hill. Then he came out of it and said to the king:

72-74. "O King, this hill cannot be penetrated with the slender yogic powers that you possess. You will find it too dense. Nevertheless you must be taken into it as my father ordered. Now, leave your gross body in this hole covered with bushes; enter the hill with your mental sheath along with me.' The king could not do it and asked:

75. "Tell me, saint, how I am to throw off this body. If I do it forcibly, I shall die.

76. "The saint smiled at this and said: 'You do not seem to know yoga. Well, close your eyes.'

77. "The king closed his eyes; the saint forthwith entered into him, took the other's subtle body and left the gross body in the hole.

78. "Then by his yogic power the saint entered the hill with this subtle body snatched from the other which was filled with the desire of seeing the empire within the bowels of the hill.

79. "Once inside he roused up the sleeping individual to dream. The latter now found himself held by the saint in the wide expanse of ether.

Note. - The ativahika sarira (astral body), exhaustively treated in Yoga Vasishta.

80-82. "He was alarmed on looking in all directions and requested the saint, 'Do not forsake me lest I should perish in this illimitable space.' The saint laughed at his terror and said, 'I shall never forsake you. Be assured of it. Now look round at everything and have no fear.'

83-95. "The king took courage and looked all round. He saw the sky above, enveloped in the darkness of night and shining with stars. He ascended there and looked down below; he came to the region of the moon and was benumbed with cold. Protected by the saint, he went up to the Sun and was scorched by its rays. Again tended by the saint, he was refreshed and saw the whole region a counterpart of the Heaven. He went up to the summits of the Himalayas with the saint and was shown the whole region and also the earth. Again endowed with powerful eye-sight, he was able to see far-off lands and discovered other worlds besides this one. In the distant worlds there was darkness prevailing in some places; the earth was gold in some; there were oceans and island continents traversed by rivers and mountains; there were the heavens peopled by Indra and the Gods, the asuras, human beings, the rakshasas and other races of celestials. He also found that the saint had divided himself as Brahman in Satyaloka, as Vishnu in Vaikunta, and as Siva in Kailasa while all the time he remained as his original-self the king ruling in the present world. The king was struck with wonder on seeing the yogic power of the saint. The sage's son said to him: 'This sightseeing has lasted only a single day according to the standards prevailing here, whereas twelve thousand years have passed by in the world you are used to. So let us return to my father.'

96. "Saying so, he helped the other to come out of the hill to this outer world."

Thus ends the Chapter XII on sight-seeing in the Ganda Hill in Tripura Rahasya.

CHAPTER XIII

HOW WAKEFULNESS AND DREAM ARE SIMILAR IN NATURE AND OBJECTS ARE ONLY MENTAL IMAGES

1-2. The sage's son made the king sleep, united his subtle body with the gross one left in the hole, and then woke him up.

3. On regaining his senses, Mahasena found the whole world changed. The people, the river courses, the trees, the tanks, etc., were all different.

4-30. He was bewildered and asked the saint:

"O great one! How long have we spent seeing your world? This world looks different from the one I was accustomed to! "Thus asked, the sage's son said to Mahasena: 'Listen King, this is the world which we were in and left to see that within the hill. The same has undergone enormous changes owing to the long interval of time. We spent only one day looking round the hill region; the same interval counts for twelve thousand years in this land; and it has accordingly changed enormously. Look at the difference in the manners of the people and their languages. Such changes are natural. I have often noticed similar changes before. Look here! This is the Lord, my father in Samadhi. Here you stood before, praising my father and praying to him. There you see the hill in front of you.

"By this time, your brother's progeny has increased to thousands. What was Vanga, your country, with Sundara, your capital, is now a jungle infested with jackals and wild animals. There is now one Virabahu in your brother's line who has his capital Visala on the banks of the Kshipra in the country of Malwa; in your line, there is Susarma whose capital is Vardhana in the country of the Dravidas, on the banks of the Tambrabharani. Such is the course of the world which cannot remain the same even for a short time. For in this period, the hills, rivers, lakes, and the contour of the earth have altered. Mountains subside; plains heave high; deserts become fertile; plateaus change to sandy tracts; rocks decompose and become silt; clay hardens sometimes; cultivated farms become barren and barren lands are brought under tillage; precious stones become valueless and trinkets become invaluable; salt water becomes sweet and potable waters become brackish; some lands contain more people than cattle, others are infested with wild beasts; and yet others are invaded by venomous reptiles, insects and vermin. Such are some of the changes that happen on the earth in course of time. But there is no doubt that this is the same earth as we were in before."

Mahasena heard all that the sage's son said and fainted from the shock. Then being brought round by his companion, he was overcome by grief and mourned the loss of his royal brother and brother's son and of his own wife and children. After a short time, the sage's son assuaged his grief with wise words: "Being a sensible man, why do you mourn and at whose loss? A sensible man never does anything without a purpose, to act without

discernment is childish. Think now, and tell me what loss grieves you and what purpose your grief will serve."

Asked thus, Mahasena, who was still inconsolable retorted: "Great sage that you are, can you not understand the cause of my sorrow? How is it that you seek the reason of my grief when I have lost my all? A man is generally sad when only one of his family dies. I have lost all my friends and relatives and you still ask me why I am sad."

31-48. The sage's son continued derisively. "King! tell me now. Is this lapse into sorrow a hereditary virtue? will it result in sin if you do not indulge in it on this occasion? Or do you hope to recover your loss by such grief? King! Think well and tell me what you gain by your sorrow. If you consider it irresistible, listen to what I say.

"Such loss is not fresh. Your forefathers have died before. Have you ever mourned their loss? If you say that it is because of blood relationship that it now causes your grief, were there not worms in the bodies of your parents, living on their nourishment? Why are they not your relatives and why does not their loss cause you sorrow? King, think! Who are you? Whose deaths are the cause of your present grief?

"Are you the body, or other than that? The body is simply a conglomerate of different substances. Harm to any one of the constituents is harm to the whole. There is no moment in which each of the components is not changing. But the excretions do not constitute a loss to the body.

"Those whom you called your brother and so on are mere bodies; the bodies are composed of earth; when lost, they return to earth; and earth resolves ultimately into energy. Where then is the loss?

"In fact you are not the body. You own the body and call it your own, just as you do a garment you happen to possess. Where lies the difference between your body and your garment? Have you any doubt regarding this conclusion? Being other than your own body, what relation is there between you and another body? Did you ever claim similar relationship, say with your brother's clothes? Why then mourn over the loss of bodies, which are in no way different from garments?

"You speak of 'my' body, 'my' eyes, 'my' life, 'my' mind and so on, I ask you now to tell me what precisely you are."

Being confronted thus, Mahasena began to think over the matter, and unable to solve the problem he asked leave to consider it carefully. Then he returned and said with all humility "Lord, I do not see who I am. I have considered the matter, and still I do not understand. My grief is only natural; I cannot account for it.

"Master, I seek your protection. Kindly tell me what it is. Every one is overpowered by grief when his relative dies. No one seems to know his own self; nor does one mourn all losses.

"I submit to you as your disciple. Please elucidate this matter to me."

Being thus requested, the sage's son spoke to Mahasena:

49. "King, listen! People are deluded by the illusion cast by Her Divine Majesty. They partake of misery that is due to the ignorance of their selves. Their misery is meaningless.

50. "As long as the ignorance of the self lasts, so long will there be misery.

51-52. "Just as a dreamer is foolishly alarmed at his own dreams or as a fool is deluded by the serpents created in a magic performance, so also the man ignorant of the Self is terrified.

53-55. "Just as the dreamer awakened from his fearful dream or the man attending the magic performance informed of the unreal nature of the magic creations, no longer fears them but ridicules another who does, so also one aware of the Self not only does not grieve but also laughs at another's grief. Therefore, O valiant hero, batter down this impregnable fortress of illusion and conquer your misery by realisation of the Self. In the meantime be discriminating and not so foolish."

56-58. After hearing the sage's son, Mahasena said, 'Master, your illustration is not to the point. Dream or magic is later realised to be illusory whereas this hard concrete universe is always real and purposeful. This is unassailed and persistent. How can it be compared to the evanescent dream?' Then the sage's son answered:

59. "Listen to what I say. Your opinion that the illustration is not to the point is a double delusion like a dream in a dream.

Note. - The commentary says that the first delusion is the idea of separateness of the universe from oneself and that the second is the idea that dream objects are an illusion in contradistinction to those seen while awake. This is compared to the illusion that a dreamer mistakes the dream-rope for a dream-serpent. (The dream is itself an illusion and the mistake is an illusion in the illusion).

60-70. "Consider the dream as a dreamer would and tell me whether the trees do not afford shade to the pedestrians, and bear fruits for the use of others. Is the dream realised to be untrue and evanescent in the dream itself?

"Do you mean to say that the dream is rendered false after waking from it? Is not the waking world similarly rendered false in your dream or deep sleep?

"Do you contend that the waking state is not so because there is continuity in it after you wake up? Is there no continuity in your dreams from day to day?

"If you say that it is not evident, tell me whether the continuity in the wakeful world is not broken up every moment of your life.

"Do you suggest that the hills, the seas and the earth itself are really permanent phenomena, in spite of the fact that their appearance is constantly changing? Is not the dream-world also similarly continuous with its earth, mountains, rivers, friends and relatives?

"Do you still doubt its abiding nature? Then extend the same reasoning to the nature of the wakeful world and know it to be equally evanescent.

"The ever-changing objects like the body, trees, rivers, and islands are easily found to be transitory. Even mountains are not immutable, for their contours change owing to the erosion of waterfalls and mountain torrents; ravages by men, boars and wild animals, insects; thunder; lightning and storms; and so on. You will observe similar change in the seas and on earth.

"Therefore I tell you that you should investigate the matter closely. (You will probably argue as follows:)

71-76. "Dream and wakefulness resemble each other in their discontinuous harmony (like a chain made up of links). There is no unbroken continuity in any object because every new appearance implies a later disappearance. But continuity cannot be denied in the fundamentals underlying the objects!

"Because a dream creation is obliterated and rendered false by present experience - what distinction will you draw between the fundamentals underlying the dream objects and the present objects?

"If you say that the dream is an illusion and its fundamentals are equally so, whereas the present creation is not so obliterated and its fundamentals must therefore be true, I ask you what illusion is. It is determined by the transitory nature, which is nothing but appearance to, and disappearance from, our senses.

"Is not everything obliterated in deep sleep? If you maintain however, that mutual contradiction is unreliable as evidence and so proves nothing, it amounts to saying that self-evident sight alone furnishes the best proof. Quite so, people like you do not have a true insight into the nature of things.

77-79. "Therefore, take my word for it, the present world is only similar to the dream world. Long periods pass in dreams also. Therefore, purposefulness and enduring nature are in every way similar to both states. Just as you are obviously aware in your waking state, so also you are in your dream state.

80. "These two states being so similar, why do you not mourn the loss of your dream relations?

81. "The wakeful universe appears so real to all only by force of habit. If the same be imagined vacuous it will melt away into the void.

82-83. "One starts imagining something; then contemplates it; and by continuous or repeated association resolves that it is true unless contradicted. In that way, the world appears real in the manner one is used to it. My world that you visited furnishes the proof thereof; come now, let us go round the hill and see."

85. Saying so, the sage's son took the king, and went round the hill and returned to the former spot.

86-87. Then he continued: "Look, O King! the circuit of the hill is hardly two miles and a half and yet you have seen a universe within it. Is it real or false? Is it a dream or otherwise? What has passed as a day in that land, has counted for twelve thousand years here, which is correct? Think, and tell me. Obviously you cannot distinguish this from a dream and cannot help concluding that the world is nothing but imagination. My world will disappear instantly if I cease contemplating it.

"Therefore convince yourself of the dream-like nature of the world and do not indulge in grief at your brother's death.

90. "Just as the dream creations are pictures moving on the mind screens, so also this world including yourself is the obverse of the picture depicted by pure intelligence and it is nothing more than an image in a mirror. See how you will feel after this conviction. Will you be elated by the accession of a dominion or depressed by the death of a relative in your dream?

91. "Realise that the Self is the self-contained mirror projecting and manifesting this world. The Self is pure unblemished consciousness. Be quick! Realise it quickly and gain transcendental happiness!"

Thus ends the Chapter on the Vision of the Hill City in Tripura Rahasya.

CHAPTER XIV

HOW THE UNIVERSE IS MERE IMAGINATION;

HOW TO GAIN THAT STRONG WILL WHICH CAN CREATE IT;

AND THE HIGHEST TRUTH

1-6. Having heard the sage's son, Mahasena began to think clearly and seriously; he concluded the world to be dream-like and overcame his grief. Growing strong in mind, he was not perturbed. Then he asked his companion: "Great and wise saint! You know this world and beyond. I do not believe that there is anything that you do not know. Please answer me now: How can you say that the whole is pure imagination? However much I may imagine, my imagination does not materialise. But you have created a universe by the force of your will. And yet, how do time and space differ in these creations? Please tell me." On being thus asked, the sage's son replied:

7. "The will conceives either effectively or ineffectively according as it is uniform or broken up by indecision.

8. "Do you not know this world to be the result of Brahma's desire? This looks real and permanent because the original desire is so powerful.

9. "Whereas the world of your creation no one takes seriously, and your own mistrust makes it useless.

10-15. "Conceptions materialise for various reasons as follows: by virtue of the natural function as with Brahma, the Creator; by the possession of live-gems as with Yakshas and Rakshasas (classes of celestial beings); by the use of herbs as with Gods (nectar is reputed to contain the extracts of superb herbs); by the practice of yoga as with yogis; by the miraculous power of incantations as with a few siddhas; by the force of penance as with some sages; and by virtue of boons as with the Architect of the universe (Viswakarma).

"One should forget the old associations in order to make one's new conception effective and this endures only so long as it is not obstructed by the old one. A conception is forceful unless obstructed by an antecedent one and thus destroyed. It is effective only when forceful; in that way even great things may be achieved.

16. "Your conceptions do not materialise for the aforesaid reason. Therefore you must practise focussing of thought if you desire your own creations to endure.

17-23. "I shall tell you now about the difference in time and space. You are not proficient in the affairs of the world, and therefore you are mystified. I shall now make it clear how these differences appear. The Sun helps all to see but blinds the owls; water is the abode of fishes but drowns man; fire burns a man but is food to tittiri (a species of bird); fire is ordinarily put out by water but it flourishes in the middle of ocean at the time of dissolution. Similar discrepancies are evident elsewhere. Men and animals engage in activities with their limbs and senses, whereas spirits do so with bodies of others. Instances like these are innumerable. Their explanation is as follows:

24-25. "Sight is of the eye and cannot be without it. A jaundiced eye sees everything yellow and myopia produces the double image of a single object.

26-32. "Abnormal visions are thus the direct result of abnormal eyes. The Karandakas, in an Eastern island, are said to see everything red; so also the inhabitants of Ramanaka isle see everything upside down. One hears many more strange stories of the kind, all of which are based on abnormalities of vision. They can all be remedied by proper treatment. The same applies to other senses including the mind. The relation between space and objects and between time and events is according to your estimate of them; there is no intrinsic relationship between them.

33. "(Having so far proved the objects and events to be only within, he proceeds to establish that there is no 'exterior' to the self). 'What is designated as exterior' by people, is simply the origin and prop of the universe like the screen with relation to the picture on it.

34-40. "There could be nothing external to that 'exterior' except it be one's own body. How can that be externalised from the 'exterior'? For example, when you say 'outside the hill' the hill is withdrawn from the space beyond; it is not included in it. But the body is seen in space just as a pot is seen.

"The body must therefore be external to the seer. What is visible lies within the range of illumination: if without, it cannot be seen. Therefore the illumined objects must be within the vision of the illuminant. The body, etc., are the illumined, because they are themselves objectified. The illumined and the illuminant cannot be identical.

"Again the illuminant cannot be objectified; for who is the seer apart from it? and how can the illumination by which he sees be apart from him? That the illuminant affords the light and serves as an object standing apart from the seer, is impossible to maintain. Therefore the illuminant cannot admit of any foreign admixture in it, and he is the illumination in perfection - only one, and the being of all.

41. "He extends as time and space; they are infinite and perfect, being involved as the illuminant, illumination and the illumined.

42. "As regards within or without, everything is included in illumination. How can then anything be 'outer' unless it is like a peak on a mountain?

43. "The whole universe is thus in the illumination which shines self-sufficient, by itself, everywhere, and at all times.

44-45. "Such illumination is Her Transcendental Majesty Tripura, the Supreme. She is called Brahma in the Vedas, Vishnu by the Vaishnavites, Siva by the Saivites, and Sakti by the Saktas. There is indeed nothing but She.

46. "She holds everything by Her prowess as a mirror does its images. She is the illuminant in relation to the illumined.

47-49. "The object is sunk in illumination like the image of a city in a mirror. Just as the city is not apart from the mirror, so also the universe is not apart from consciousness. Just as the image is part and parcel of the clear, smooth, compact and one mirror, so also the universe as part and parcel of the perfect, solid and unitary consciousness, namely the Self.

50. "The world cannot be demonstrably ascertained. Space is simply void serving for the location of materials.

51. "The universe is, always and all-through, a phenomenon in the Self. The question then arises how consciousness, being void, is dense at the same time.

52. "Just as a mirror, though, dense and impenetrable, contains the image, so also pure consciousness is dense and impenetrable and yet displays the universe by virtue of its self-sufficiency.

53. "Though consciousness is all-pervading, dense and single, it still holds the mobile and immobile creation within it, wonderful in its variety, with no immediate or ultimate cause for it.

54-55. "Just as the mirror remains unaffected by the passage of different images and yet continues to reflect as clearly as before, so also the one consciousness illumines the waking and dream states which can be verified by proper meditation.

56. "O King! Examine again your day-dreams and mental imagery. Though they are perfect in detail, yet they are no less mental.

57. "Consciousness permeating them obviously remains unblemished before creation or after dissolution of the world; even during the existence of the world, it remains unaffected as the mirror by the images.

58. "Though unperturbed, unblemished, thick, dense and single the absolute consciousness being self-sufficient manifests within itself what looks 'exterior', just like a mirror reflecting space as external to itself.

59-60. "This is the first step in creation; it is called ignorance or darkness; starting as an infinitesimal fraction of the whole, it manifests as though external to its origin, and is a property of the ego-sense. The alienation is on account of the latent tendencies to be manifested later. Because of its non-identity with the original consciousness, it is now simple, insentient energy."

Note. - The commentary has it: What is absolute consciousness goes under the name of Maya just before creation, and is later called Avidya (or ignorance) with the manifestation of the ego. The agitation in the quietness is due to subtle time fructifying the latent tendencies of the ego which had not merged in the primordial state at the time of the dissolution of the Universe.

61. "That consciousness which illumines the 'exterior' is called Sivatattva, whereas the individual feeling as 'I' is Saktitattva.

Note. - Siva is awareness of the 'exterior'; Sakti is the dynamic force operating the potential tendencies in the individual self.

62. "When the awareness of the 'exterior', combined with the 'I', encompasses the entire imagined space as 'I' it is called Sada-Siva-tattva.

63. "When, later, discarding the abstraction of the Self and the exterior, clear identification with the insentient space takes place, it is called Isvara-tattva. The investigation of the last two steps is pure vidya (knowledge).

64. "All these five tattvas are pure because they relate to an as-yet-undifferentiated condition like potentialities in a seed.

65. "After the differentiation is made manifest by will-force the insentient part predominates over the other, as opposed to the contrary condition before.

66. "That insentient predominance is called Maya Sakti after differentiation is clearly established, like the sprout from a seed.

67-69. "The sentient phase now contacts being relegated to a minor position, and takes on the name of Purusha being covered by five sheaths, namely kala (something of doership), vidya (some knowledge), raga (desire) kala (time - allotted life) and niyati (fixed order of things).

70. "Anamnesis of individuals made up of the proclivities acquired as a result of engaging in diverse actions in previous births, is now supported by intelligence and remains as prakriti (nature).

71. "This prakriti is tripartite because the fruits of actions are of three kinds; She manifests as the three states of life wakefulness, dream and deep sleep, She then assumes the name, chitta (mind).

72. "The anamnesis goes by the name of Prakriti in dreamless slumber, and Chitta in the other states. It is always comprised of the insentient phase of the proclivities of the mind and the sentient phase of intelligence.

73. "When the proclivities still remain in abeyance without being used up, its totality is called avyakta (unmanifested); differences arise only in chitta, there is no difference among individuals in sleep and so it is prakriti, the same assuming the name of chitta when differences manifest.

Note. - Sleep is characterised by undifferentiation and so it is the same for all, irrespective of propensities of the mind. Simultaneous with the awareness of the body the

other states manifest. Individual enjoyments - pleasure and pain - lie only in the wakeful and dream states, according as the innate tendencies of the mind mature and yield fruits. When one crop is over sleep supervenes, then there is no enjoyment and no distinction according to crops. As the anamnesis is ready with the next crop, sleep is shaken off and differences arise. So it is clear how the one undifferentiated condition manifests as the universe in all its diversity and resolves into itself periodically.

75. "Therefore the mind (chitta) is purusha (the individual) when the sentient phase is assertive, and the same is ayakta (unmanifest) when prakriti (nature), the insentient phase, is assertive.

76. "That chitta is tripartite according to its functions, namely, ego, intellect and mind.

77. "When influenced by the three qualities, it manifests in greater details as follows: by satva (brightness), it becomes the five senses, hearing, sight, touch, taste and smell; by rajas (activity) speech, hands, feet, organs of excretion and of procreation; by tamas (darkness) earth, air, fire, water and ether.

78. "The supreme intelligence coquets with the universe in this manner, remaining all the time unaffected, a witness of its own creation.

79. "The present creation is the mental product of Brahma or Hiranyagarbha, appointed creator by the will-force of the Primal Being, Sri Tripura.

80. "The cognition 'you' and 'I' is the essence of any kind of creation; such cognition is the manifestation of transcendental consciousness; there cannot be any difference (just as there is no difference in space, bounded by a pot or not bounded by it).

81. "The diversities in creation are solely due to qualifications limiting the consciousness; these qualifications (i.e., body, limiting of age) are the mental imagery of the creator (consistent with the individual's past merits); when the creative will-force wears away there is dissolution and complete undifferentiation results.

82. "As for your will-power, it is overpowered by the creator when that impediment is surmounted by the methods already mentioned, your will-power will also become effective.

83. "Time, space, gross creations, etc., appear in it according to the imagery of the agent.

84-86. "A certain period is only one day according to my calculation whereas it is twelve thousand years according to Brahma: the space covered by about two miles and a half of Brahma is infinite according to me and covers a whole universe. In this way, both are true and untrue at the same time.

87-88. "Similarly also, imagine a hill within you, and also time in a subtle sense. Then contemplate a whole creation in them; they will endure as long as your concentration endures - even to eternity for all practical purposes, if your will-power be strong enough.

"Therefore I say that this world is a mere figment of imagination.

89. "O King! it shines in the manifest conscious Self within. Therefore what looks like the external world is really an image on the screen of the mind.

90. "Consciousness is thus the screen and the image, and so yogis are enabled to see long distances of space and realise long intervals of time.

91. "They can traverse all distance in a moment and can perceive everything as readily as a gooseberry in the hollow of one's palm.

92. "Therefore recognise the fact that the world is simply an image on the mirror of consciousness and cultivate the contemplation of 'I am', abide as pure being and thus give up this delusion of the reality of the world.

93-97. "Then you will become like myself one in being self-sufficient."

Dattatreya continued:

"On hearing this discourse of the sage's son, the king overcame his delusion; his intellect became purified and he understood the ultimate goal. Then he practised samadhi, and became self-contained, without depending on any external agency, and led a long and happy life. He ceased to identify himself with the body, and became absolute as transcendental space until he was finally liberated. So you see, Bhargava, that the universe is only mental image, just as firm as one's will-power, and no more. It is not independent of the Self. Investigate the matter yourself, and your delusion will gradually lose hold of you and pass off."

Thus ends the Chapter XIV on the story of the Hill City in Tripura Rahasya.

CHAPTER XV

ON WHAT NEED BE KNOWN AND NEED NOT BE KNOWN

AND ON THE NATURE OF THE SELF

1. On hearing Dattatreya relate the wonderful story of the Hill City, Parasurama marvelled more and more.

2. He, with a clear mind, pondered over the teachings of his Master, and then returned to him and asked him again:

3. "Lord, I have considered the purport of your teachings in the shape of the magnificent stories you told me.

4. "I understand that intelligence alone is real and single, and that objects are only unreal images like a city reflected in a mirror.

5. "Her Transcendental Majesty, the Maheswari, is that consciousness manifesting as Intelligence cognisant of the whole range of phenomena beginning from the unmanifest state of sleep and ending with this world passing in quick succession within itself.

6. "All these are apparently due to the self-sufficiency of that consciousness and they come into being without any immediate cause. This much I have understood after deep consideration.

7. "But this intelligence is said to be beyond cognition because it always remains as pure knowledge itself.

8. "I do not see how it can be realised if it surpasses knowledge. The goal is not achieved without realising it.

9. "The goal is liberation. What is its nature? If one can be liberated while alive, still how is the course of his emancipated life regulated, if that is at all possible?

10. "There are sages who are active. What is the relation between the world of action and their pure conscious being?

11. "How can they engage in action while all the time they inhere in absolute consciousness? Such consciousness can be of only one kind, and liberation also can be only one in order to be effective.

12-17. "How then are these differences noticed in the lives of the jnanis? Some of them are active; some teach scriptures; some worship deities; some abstract themselves into samadhi; some lead an austere life and emaciate themselves; some give clear instructions to their disciples; some rule kingdom quite justly; some openly hold disputations with other schools of thought; some write down their teachings and experiences; others simulate ignorance; a few even reprehensible and loathsome actions; but all of them are famous as wise men in the world.

18. "How can there be such differences in their lives when there can be no difference in the state of liberation common to all? Or are there grades in knowledge and liberation?

19. "Kindly enlighten me on these points, because I am eager to learn the truth and submit to you as my sole Teacher."

20. Thus requested, Dattatreya appeared pleased with the questions and answered the worthy disciple as follows:

21. "Worthy Rama! You are indeed fit to reach that goal because you have now turned towards the right way of investigation.

22. "This is due to the Grace of God which puts you in the right way of investigation. Who can attain anything worthy, without divine Grace?

23. "The beneficent work of the self-inhering divine Grace is finished when the inward turning of one's mind increases in strength day by day.

24-25. "What you have said so far is quite true; you have rightly understood the nature of consciousness but have not realised it. A knowledge of the property of a thing without actual experience of the thing itself is as useless as no knowledge.

26. "True experience of the Self is the unawareness of even 'I am'. Can the world persist after such unawareness? Second-hand knowledge is no better than the recollection of a dream.

27. "Just as the accession of treasure in a dream is useless, so also is secondhand knowledge.

28. "I shall illustrate it with a very ancient story. There was formerly a very virtuous king ruling over Videha.

29. "He was Janaka by name, very wise and conversant with both this world and beyond. At one time he worshipped with sacrificial rites the Goddess, inhering as the Self.

30. "There came for the occasion, all the Brahmins, pandits, hermits, critics, those versed in the Vedas, those accustomed to share in sacrificial rites and sacrifices, etc.

31. "At the same time, Varuna, the God of waters, wanted to perform a similar sacrifice, but worthy men did not accept the invitation.

32-37. "For they were pleased with Janaka who respected them duly.

"Then Varuna's son, who was a great dialectician, came to them. He disguised himself as a Brahmin, in order to decoy the Brahmin guests. On entering the royal chamber he duly blessed the king and addressed him thus before all the assembly. 'O King, your assembly is not as good as it should be. It looks like a lovely lake of lotuses ravaged by crows, jackdaws and herons; it would be better without this medley of incompetents. I do not find a single individual here who will be an ornament to a great assembly like a swan to a

lovely lake of lotuses. May God bless you! I shall have nothing to do with this multitude of fools.'

38-41. "Being thus insulted by Varuna's son, the whole assembly stood up to a man and said in anger:

"You charlatan of a Brahmin! How dare you insult everybody here? What learning have you which is wanting in us? Wicked man that you are, you are only a bluffer! You shall not leave this place until you have proved your superiority over us. There are great pandits assembled here from all over the world. Do you hope to subdue all of them by your learning? Tell us your special subject in which you imagine yourself more proficient than us!'

Thus challenged, Varuni replied:

42-43. "I will in a minute outdo you all in debate; but that shall be only on the condition that if I am defeated, you will throw me into the sea; and if you are defeated, I will consign you to the sea, one after another. If you agree to this condition, let us have a debate.

44-45. "They consented and the debate began in right earnest. The pandits were shortly defeated by the fallacious logic of the opponent and they were sunk in the sea by hundreds.

46. "Varuna's followers then took away the sunken pandits to his sacrifice where they were received with respect which much pleased them.

47. "There was one by name Kahoela, among those who were thus sunk. His son Ashtavakra, having heard of his father's fate, hastened to Janaka's court and challenged the debater skilled in fallacy. The masquerader was now defeated and straightaway condemned to the sea by the young avenger. Then Varuni threw off his mask in the court and restored back all the men formerly drowned in the sea. Kahoela's son was now puffed with pride and behaved offensively before the assembled court. The pandits were made to feel mortified before the youth.

51-52. "Just then, a female ascetic appeared in their midst, to whom the offended assembly looked for help. Encouraging them in their hopes, the charming maiden with matted locks and hermit's clothes was highly honoured by the king and she spoke in sweet and yet firm tones:

53. "'Oh child! Son of Kahoela! You are indeed very accomplished, for these Brahmins have been rescued by you after you defeated Varuni in debate.

54-56. "'I want to ask of you a short question, to which please give a straight answer, explicit and unreserved. What is that condition reaching which there will be all-round immortality: knowing which all doubts and uncertainties will disappear; and established

in which all desires will vanish? If you have realised that unbounded state, please tell me directly.'

"Being approached by the ascetic, the son of Kahoela replied with confidence:

57-58. "'I know it. Listen to what I say. There is nothing in the world not known to me. I have studied all the sacred literature with great care. Therefore hear my answer.

59-63. "What you ask is the primal and efficient cause of the universe, being itself without beginning, middle or end, and uneffected by time and space. It is pure, unbroken, single Consciousness. The whole world is manifested in it like a city in a mirror. Such is that transcendental state. On realising it, one becomes immortal; there is no place for doubts and uncertainties, as there is no more reason for ignorance as at the sight of innumerable reflected images; and there will be no more room for desire, because transcendence is then experienced.

"It is also unknowable because there is no one to know it, besides itself.

"Ascetic! I have now told you the truth as contained in the Scriptures.'

64-71. "After Ashtavakra had finished, the hermit spoke again: 'Young sage! What you say, is rightly said and accepted by all. But I draw your attention to that part of your answer where you admitted its unknowability for want of a knower outside of consciousness; and also that its knowledge confers immortality and perfection. How are these two statements to be reconciled? Either admit that consciousness is unknowable, is not known to you, and thus conclude its non-existence; or say that it is, and that you know it - and therefore it is not unknowable.

"You evidently speak from secondhand knowledge, gathered from the scriptures. Clearly, you have not realised it and so your knowledge is not personal.

"Think now - your words amount to this - you have a personal knowledge of the images but not of the mirror. How can that be?

"Tell me now if you are not ashamed of this prevarication before King Janaka and his assembly.'

"Being thus reprimanded by the ascetic, he could not speak for some time because he felt mortified and ashamed; so he remained with bent head thinking it over.

72-73. "However, the Brahmin youth could not find any satisfactory answer to her question, so he submitted to her in great humility: 'O ascetic! Truly I cannot find the answer to your question. I submit to you as your disciple. Pray tell me how the two scriptural statements are to be reconciled. But I assure you that I have not told a deliberate lie, for I know that any merits a liar may have are counteracted by his lies so that he is condemned as unworthy.'

74. "Thus requested, the ascetic was pleased with Ashtavakra's sincerity and said to him in the hearing of the assembly.

75-84. "'Child, there are many who being ignorant of this sublime truth, live in a state of delusion. Dry polemics will not help one to Reality for it is well guarded on all sides. Of all the people now assembled here, no one has experienced Reality, except the king and myself. It is not a subject for discussion. The most brilliant logic can only approach it but never attain it. Although unaffected by logic coupled with a keen intellect, it can however be realised by service to one's Guru and the grace of God.

"O thou who art thyself the son of a Sage, listen to me carefully, for this is hard to understand even when hearing it explained. Hearing it a thousand times over will be useless unless one verifies the teachings by means of investigation into the Self with a concentrated mind. Just as a prince labours under a misapprehension that the string of pearls still clinging to his neck has been stolen away by another and is not persuaded to the contrary by mere words but only believes when he finds it around his neck by his own effort so also, O youth, however clever a man may be, he will never know his own self by the mere teaching of others unless he realises it for himself. Otherwise he can never realise the Self if his mind is turned outward.

85. "A lamp illumines all around but does not illumine itself or another light. It shines of itself without other sources of light. Things shine in sunlight without the necessity for any other kind of illumination. Because lights do not require to be illumined, do we say that they are not known or that they do not exist?

"Therefore, as it is thus with lights and things made aware by the conscious self, what doubt can you have regarding abstract consciousness, namely the Self?

"Lights and things being insentient, cannot be self-aware. Still, their existence or manifestation is under no doubt. That means they are self-luminous. Can you not similarly investigate with an inward mind in order to find out if the all-comprehending Self is conscious or not conscious?

"That Consciousness is absolute and transcends the three states (wakefulness, dream and slumber) and comprises all the universe making it manifest. Nothing can be apprehended without its light.

"Will anything be apparent to you, if there be no consciousness? Even to say that nothing is apparent to you (as in sleep) requires the light of consciousness. Is not your awareness of your unawareness (in sleep) due to consciousness?

"If you infer its eternal light, then closely investigate whether the light is of itself or not. Everybody falls in this investigation however learned and proficient he may be, because his mind is not bent inward but restlessly moves outward. As long as thoughts crop up, so long has the turning inward of the mind not been accomplished. As long as the mind is

not inward, so long the Self cannot be realised. Turning inward means absence of desire. How can the mind be fixed within if desires are not given up?

"Therefore become dispassionate and inhere as the Self. Such inherence is spontaneous (no effort is needed to inhere as the Self). It is realised after thoughts are eliminated and investigation ceases. Recapitulate your state after you break off from it, and then will know all and the significance of its being knowable and unknowable at the same time. Thus realising the unknowable, one abides in immortality for ever and ever.

"I have now finished. Salutations to you! Farewell!

"But you have not yet understood my words because this is the first time you hear the truth. This king, the wisest among men, can make you understand. So ask him again and he will clear your doubts."

"When she had finished, she was honoured by the king and the whole assembly, and then she instantly dissolved in air and disappeared from human sight.

"I have now related to you, O Rama, the method of Self-Realisation."

Thus ends the Chapter XV on Ashtavakra Section in Tripura Rahasya.
